

Public servants, God's servants

by Christina Pleizier

Mrs. Pleizier is a public servant working for Statistics Canada in Ottawa.

How do we serve God by serving the public? This is a question that Christian federal public servants are faced with each day, and that various speakers attempted to answer during the second annual conference of the Public Service Christian Fellowship (PSCF), held late last year at the University of Ottawa.

After opening remarks by PSCF co-chairman Roy Robinson, who is an assistant deputy minister in the Department of the Environment, the first speaker was introduced. Laverne Lewycky, MP for Dauphine, Manitoba, spoke on the role of the Christian in government service. Mr. Lewycky is a very engaging speaker who managed to have instant rapport with his audience by means of the humour with which he sprinkled his speech. Yet his message was serious. Public servants, as all Christians, must recognize that God has a claim over all of life, private as well as government. They often do not have a good image, and for that reason they must remember that they are there to serve humbly, not to be served, while depending on God's help.

These thoughts were reflected in the words of the second speaker, Don Page, a historian with External Affairs. He spoke on "The Christian Employee," who, he said, is called to serve God first of all, and then his employer. A Christian employee cannot differentiate between secular and spiritual tasks; he must be Christ's ambassador in whatever he does. However, Christian employees are still subject to the high-

er powers and must be obedient. Christians should see even difficulties in their employment as opportunities for witnessing. Mr. Page pointed out that for many people the only contact with Christians is during the time that they work with them.

In addition to these speakers the conference included several personal testimonies by public servants who had found Christ, and a panel discussion in which panel members related how they shared Christ in their place of work. This latter item on the program is a question shared by many employees — how do I share Christ on the job? Unfortunately no concrete answers were given, and it was evident that the panel members were also struggling with that question.

Musical interludes were provided by two groups: the Gospel Brothers (members of the Calvin CRC in Ottawa) presented some old gospel favourites in their impeccable harmonization; the Yeshua Group presented a joyful and intense testimony of faith in French Canadian music and song.

Attendance at the conference was disappointing at 125, less than half of those at last year's conference. I don't know whether it was that fact, or the fact that this time there was a shorter program conducted without a break, but I missed the sense of excitement that pervaded the first conference where there was a fresh realization that Christians within public service were not a rarity.

Nevertheless, we were together for a purpose, to praise God, and to learn how to praise Him better wherever He has placed us. We asked His blessing on the work of our hands, on those in authority over us, and on those we serve.

Open house planned at CRC offices

The Canadian offices of the Christian Reformed Church in North America have officially opened in Burlington, Ont. An open house will be held on two consecutive days, January 16 and 17.

It will be a low-key affair in which visitors will be able to meet with the representatives of the various agencies and also to view the spacious offices in the Burlington Mall.

Open house will be on January 16 from 3-9 p.m. and on January 17 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

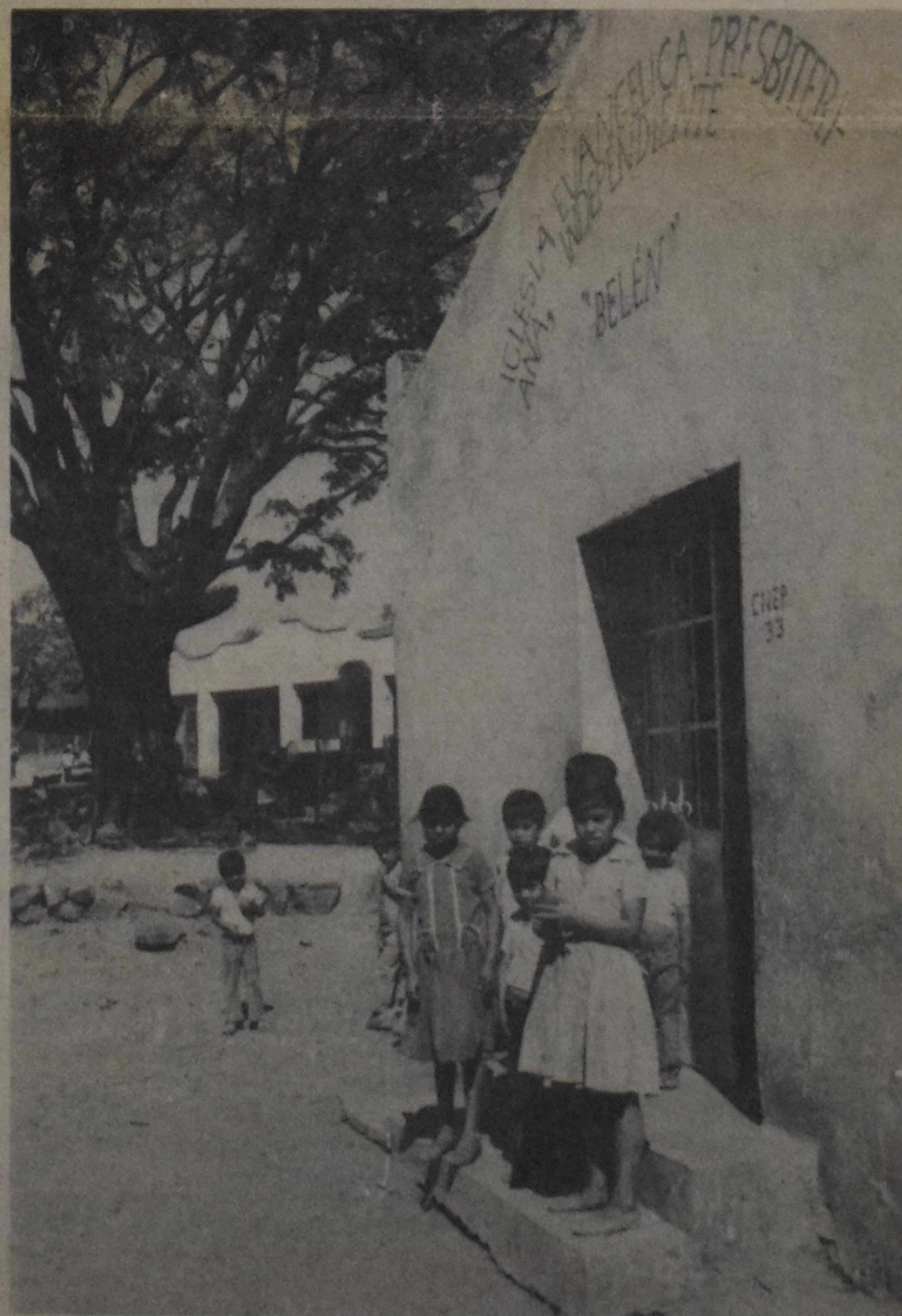
The slide-tape program "The CRC in Action" will also be shown during those hours.

The public is invited to visit the offices, located at 760 Brant St., in the heart of Burlington.

MEXICAN FACES



This Oaxaca shopkeeper and his wife represent millions of Mexicans who are waiting for Scriptures in their own language. Hearing about Christ's love makes them eager to read Scriptures.



Church has a special meaning for these children outside the Independent Presbyterian Church at Rancho Viejo, Mexico. These children are among many Mexicans who come into contact with fair-haired young people from Canada and the United States each summer. These young people are missionaries-in-training. See story on page 5.

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Viewpoint

A new use for the computer

If ever there was an area of life in the 1980s which seems to me to be totally incomprehensible, it is computer science. Computer technology has traditionally been confined to government research. It provided the brainwork for NASA's space program.

Early computers were monstrous constructions located in security-tight rooms deep in the belly of government buildings.

As you and I both know, all that has changed. You can buy computerized everything these days. Those first hand-held calculators had everyone oooh-ahhing. Now, our children use those things in school to figure out their mathematics. Moms take them shopping to keep track of how much they spend.

You can buy mini-computers for the home now which is actually programmable. You can feed information into it such as the family budget, the clothes' sizes of all your children, when the next dental appointment should be, and what you've got to bring for your church potluck supper. Some enterprising housewives store all their recipes on their home computer.

From conglomerates to the tiny watchmaker's shop, computers are available for every conceivable need.

But don't ask me how they work.

Something about chips, bits and memory. It sounds like a late night snack or a children's game to me.

We've had computerized typesetting equipment in the office for four years. No idea how it works. Just know what it does . . . and it sure beats the old, hot-lead linotypes which used to crank out articles one letter and one line at a time.

Bell Telephone is putting those microchips into its new telephones. The new phones will be able to store up to 20 numbers in memory and dial any one of them by pressing only one button. You will be able to throw away your little, hand-written pocket phone directory which still contains the names of friends who moved away 10 years ago.

The new phone will be able to redial a busy number by pressing a single button. It can also be programmed to redial a busy number up to 10 times and alert the caller when the call goes through. It can also time long-distance calls (I wonder if you can attach a foghorn to it to go off when three minutes are up?).

A number of homes in select parts of Canada have been using these phones as part of a Bell experiment and they should be available to you and I within a few months.

Alexander Graham Bell would shake his head in amazement if he saw what

was possible today. The telephone, however, has gone virtually unchanged since it was invented in 1876. The first major departure from the original basic design occurred only about 20 years ago with the introduction of push buttons.

The computer has also altered music. You can create music by computer (the Moog synthesizer) and you can also capture different sounds in a computer organ. Apparently you can play a new computer organ and not hear the difference with a pipe organ. I'll have to hear that to believe it, and I'll have a chance to do just that in mid-January. Our church is scouting around for a new organ and the computer organ appears to be a major contender.

Talking about the church, I wonder how long it will be before we find one of these computers in a corner of the consistory room. As I think about it, it wouldn't be such a bad idea. The Administration Committee could keep their budget figures current. You wouldn't have to wait for three to six months to find out how much short you were on the budget. You'd know from week to week.

You could have the entire membership list in "memory" and keep track from week to week as to who is involved in what.

"Johnny and Bill and Ralph all missed catechism for the past few weeks. They're all from the same family and from different age groups. Hmmmm."

Here's the one I like. Having been clerk in two different churches, I know what a tedious job it is to write up the minutes after a consistory meeting. I could stroll into the consistory room one evening, sit down at the computer keyboard and proceed to program in the latest data on the family visits. You could create a year by year diary of a person's family and spiritual life.

If an elder is about to visit Family X, he can check on the computer screen to see how past visits have gone and which areas need concentration.

A truly innovative custodian could program all of the bootprints of each church member into the computer so that he could find out just who it was who tracked in the mud on that Sunday morning.

Computers should be seen as a servant of man. They should be used to make work more God-glorifying. That, after all, is what life is all about. It seems simple to say that, yet it is quite something else to use them in that capacity.

Keith Knight

OUR FAITH, OTHER FAITHS

Post-Christian Europe

by Johan D. Tangelder

Western Europe can no longer be termed Christian, as it had been for a thousand years or more. Christianity had a freer course of action in Europe than anywhere else on earth. Yet two world wars centred in Europe. What happened to the Christian culture of Europe? Or was European Christian culture only a myth?

Europe never was fully Christian, but officially it was committed to that faith. Until far into the last century, the great thinkers of the West have tried to have some connection with the Christian faith. For centuries there was a Christian consensus. Despite those who disputed the Christian religion, there was a conviction that European culture had to remain Christian, guided by the norms of the Holy Bible. The shortcomings were many, but the desire for a Christian culture was there.

How different the situation is today. Compare the great writers of the 17th century with those of the first half of the 19th. Milton and Vondel were rooted in the Christian faith. Their outlook on life was Christian. Their poetry spoke of deep spiritual convictions; convictions shaped by Scripture. Consider John Milton's (1608-1674) nobility of character and devoutness. His ode *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity* beautifully describes his own personal faith:

It was the winter wild,
While the Heaven-born Child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger
lies;
Nature in awe to Him
Had doffed her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to
sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun her lusty
paramour.

Goethe and Shiller, Shelley and Byron were completely free from Christianity. For example, Percy Shelley (1792-1822) was a man of different faith, character, convictions and life from Milton. In his *Hymn of Pan* he complained:

Alas! I have nor hope nor health.
Nor peace within or calm around.
Nor that content surpassing wealth
The sage in meditation found,
And walked with inward glory
crowned —
Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor
leisure.
Others I see whom these surround —
Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;
To me that cup has been dealt in
another measure.

Shelley and his fellow writers symbolize the de-Christianization process of 19th century Europe. These men were opinion-makers. They influenced the general public. Their ideas filtered down right into the homes and cottages of the working people.

Now Christianity is repudiated by some European nations; and it is ignored by large elements in other European nations. If we want to pinpoint an event which heralded in the new age, we may choose Nietzsche's announcement in the second half of the century that God had died. Modern Europe has been designated by many scholars as post-Christian. I believe that they are right. It is not just that Europe has become secularized in its arts, politics, philosophy and social life; its tragedy is that many no longer find secularism an issue.

The victory of secularism over Christianity has been accepted as a fact. The Dutch theologian, the late J.C. Hoekendyk, described the decline of faith in contemporary Europe. He said

of the modern European: "His great-grandfather had drifted away from the church. Grandfather had not even requested the baptism of his children. Consequently his father shrugged his shoulders whenever the lad asked embarrassing questions about God."

Secularized Europe suggests the eclipse rather than the presence of God. All of existence is believed to be locked up within the confinements of man's finiteness. God never existed for many youths. Salvation Army officer, Fred Brown, wrote about the boys who frequented his youth club in the inner city of London: "For them, too, God is not dead; He never was (that is, He never existed)."

European scholars do not only speak of a post-Christian culture; they also

refer to some Europeans as post atheists. Some of these post-atheists see man stripped of all his freedom, ambitions and hopes. He is left standing naked in an inhuman and barren world. Others, who were skeptical and uncompromising intellectuals some years ago, now talk about the failure of rationalism and seek their refuge in either ancient Western paganism or in the older Eastern mystery religions.

Why missions to Europe? The de-Christianization process has led North American evangelicals to consider Europe a difficult and needy field. In the next several articles I intend to sketch the causes that led to Europe's spiritual decline.

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Subscriptions

\$17.50 for one year and \$32.00 for two years. Overseas by Airmail \$55.00. Surface mail \$25.00.
Calvinist Contact is published by Knight Publishing Ltd., 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON

Advertising

Display advertising deadline is Thursday 10 a.m. of the preceding week. Classified advertising deadline is Friday 10 a.m. for the next week's issue. See classified page for rates.
Canada Mail: Second Class Mail Registration No. 0-0451. Postage paid at St. Catharines, Ontario. Postmaster: Send address changes to Calvinist Contact, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3.

U.S. Mail: Calvinist Contact (USPS 518-090), published weekly except for the 8th and 29th of August and the last issue of December, by K. Knight Publishing Limited, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3. Second class postage paid at Lewiston, N.Y. 14092. Postmaster: send address changes to Calvinist Contact, P.O. Box 110, Lewiston, N.Y. 14092

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LETTERS

Cheating in academia seems to grow

Dear Sir:
A growing concern about student cheating on the University of Waterloo campus prompted the chaplains of Wilfrid Laurier University to use the theme, "Student Cheating" for their 1980 Chaplain's Challenge Series held at WLU in November.

At the series of three consecutive faculty luncheons, many facets of cheating were discussed including such things as: the types of cheating, the reasons for cheating, ways to curb cheating and penalties for cheating. The deeper issues of why students cheat and the question of personal and social ethics were also raised.

Raising the issue of student cheating appears to be very relevant. Last year, in a study by the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education, it was found that there is an overall lack of inte-

grity in academia (*McCall's Magazine*, Sept., 1980). A recent issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (Nov., 1980) reported that high school officials in a province of China were caught allowing an entire graduating class to cheat on university entrance exams.

The WLU series brought out a number of important questions concerning the problem of cheating. There was a general consensus that better methods of examining and more careful proctoring could reduce the incidence and temptation to cheat. The type of exam question and the relationship between student and teacher was also considered very important in this respect.

More controversial, however, was the suggestion that the university system as a whole was at fault. Its philosophy of education could not help but breed cheating. If the

university could get back to "educating" rather than simply "training" students, then cheating would not be a problem.

Was cheating on the increase? This was a difficult question to answer. While the methods of cheating were becoming more sophisticated in our electronic age, (receivers in earrings?), it was also noted that the more brazen and widespread occurrence of cheating reflected a more tolerant and permissive society.

The remarks on penalties for cheating suggested a certain ambiguity. While it was generally felt that compassion for the cheater was necessary and a fair hearing mandatory, there was a tendency to regard cheating in engineering and medicine more deserving of punishment than cheating in the arts. The reason being of course that in those fields, human life is directly at stake.

But doesn't cheating in these areas signal a deeper social malaise? Is the falling of a bridge of more weight than the atrophy of a culture's moral foundations?

We believe our series could be profitably imitated by other campus ministries.

Graham E. Morbey,
Huron Campus Ministry,
Waterloo, ON

Sickness described as "Satan's lie"

Dear Sir:
What a sad thing to hear a man of God say that God *sends* sickness, (Heynen — Nov. 14). Sickness and death came into the world when Adam and Eve sinned. That act of Adam and Eve put Satan in control of this world. The Bible refers to Satan's power in the world in several places: 1 John 5:19, John 12:31, II Cor. 4:3, 4. Satan is the destroyer, liar and thief. Jesus came to give us life. (See John 10:10, 11).

James 1:17 says that good things come from God. When Christ came as Saviour, He also came as Healer and Deliverer. If sickness is from God, why did Christ heal the sick? Satan had people bound, and

Christ delivered them, (Luke 13:16, Acts 10:38).

Why do we accept Satan's lie that sickness is sent by God, when Scripture repeatedly refers to good health and healing? These Scriptures shed light on God's will for us in the health area: Exodus 13:26; Exodus 23:25, 26; Ps. 91:10, 16; Ps. 103: 2, 3; Ps. 107:20; Isaiah 53:4-5; Matt. 8:16, 17; John 14:12; III John 2.

"Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17 NIV). Let us accept what God says in His Word about health and healing.

Clarence and Jeri Lodewyk,
Chilliwack, BC

All healing comes from God

Dear Sir:
This letter is in reference to Pastoral Counseling, November 14 on faith-healing.

Yes, the greatest healing is the healing of the soul. However, God is concerned with the whole man and I do not believe God sends sickness. God does not create a situation of sickness to bring about good. He does not need that — though He can and does at times use such a situation to bring about good, (i.e.), some do come to know the Lord through an illness and praise Him for that!

We live in a world groaning under the fall of man and there are many causes for sickness. Here are a few — anxiety, guilt, excessive drinking and smoking. There's also evidence in scripture that Satan plays a role (Luke 13:16) and there are times we are just plain sick.

Everything that happens in this world isn't God's will. Sure He is sovereign and all-knowing, but if He would intervene in every situation we would be mere puppets. We have a will which unfortunately is the cause of much suffering.

God is not far removed from this dilemma. In Exodus 15:26, God told the Israelites: "I am the Lord your healer. I am Yahweh Rophe."

Jesus is the focus of all the covenant names of God and in Jesus we meet the Yahweh Rophe. Jesus is the healing of all the human race. Not only does He feel what we feel and has compassion on us but is able and willing to meet all our needs.

The article also mentioned a lack of faith in "faith healers." There really are no faith healers, since all healing comes from God. He does use human vessels and if we recognize where the healing comes from we will accept and be thankful for the special gift God gives for our edification and His glory. The next best thing to divine healing is divine

health! There are situations where believers are not healed and we must be honest and say we don't know why, but in light of God's word and in light of the multitude of those that have been healed, we shouldn't let that deter us from a blessed truth.

God's perfect will and character is revealed fully in Jesus, who was totally centred on the will of His Father. Jesus preached with boldness, taught with patience, healed the sick, cast out demons, of course mentioning only a little of what He did. God's will for our life is reflected in Jesus too and if God does send sickness, Jesus sure spent a lot of time undoing what His Father did!

How really good God is and how His grace to us is unfailing and unending!

We await with eagerness, His second coming when our redemptive bodies will be unlike the wretched autumn bulbs we are now, but like the flower in spring that will burst forth in glory — glory to God!

Rose Zimmer,
Crescent Springs, KY

Blessed with a variety of gifts

Dear Sir:
re: Pastoral Counseling — "Faith-healing" (Nov. 14/80).

Rev. Ralph Heynen has gone a step too far. Surely he must realize the extent of influence of his column. Many Christians take to heart as the Gospel truth the thoughts he provokes and the opinion he states. Then to turn around and abuse that responsibility he leads his readers to nod in approval to an article that stops just short of burning the witches of Salem.

The article is misleading and a vain attempt at reviving old mid-fifties sentiment towards an era of canvas-top revival services in addition to which his comments are a denial of a true Gift of the Spirit by tainting this gift with human drama and showmanship, the very thing of which he accuses all faith healers.

Everyone who has confessed Jesus as their Saviour has Jesus abiding in them, (John 15:4), and therefore has the power to do all great works, (John 14:12), Rev. Heynen and

we are in agreement that the power of healing is in all of us.

We want to point out that all believers can bring the message of salvation but some among us have the gift of the utterance of wisdom and the utterance of knowledge (1 Cor. 12:8). The Christian Reformed community has no difficulty recognizing these gifts and therefore have been blessed by some great ministers, but when another gift is manifested such as healing or prophesy, we quench it.

When we learn to praise the Lord for and with the gifts He bestows on each one of us, we are sure we will see mighty works within our midst. When each of us is encouraged to seek the gifts within us and not quench the Spirit (1 Thess. 5:19), for fear of having an unacceptable gift within our circles, we may even see some great Christian Reformed faith healers and through them, may the Lord be praised!

Gerrit and Alice Verstraete,
Mississauga, ON

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Church Page

PASTORAL PONDERING

Discipline is a communal task

Discipline normally hurts. That's not surprising, since we sinners do not so easily forsake our sinful lives in order to walk with God, and obey his laws. The question is sometimes asked: Why do we as a church place a wayward member under discipline, while we at the same time spend so much effort evangelizing? Should we not consider a fallen-away member as an evangelistic prospect? No.

There is a lot of difference between a baptized member and a person who is searching for Christ, never having the benefit of a Christian family and a Christian church. The sacrament of baptism has made the child of Christian parents a covenant child. He can never escape this mark of God.

And when he grows up into the late teens or early twenties and rejects God's claim and then breaks the covenant, that's much different than when a person had never been part of the church of Christ. We may not treat our wayward young people and older members as evangelism prospects. Rather, we must always, in much love and with much patience, discipline them with the Word of God. We need to call them back to God. They know the way, but refuse to walk it.

That's why discipline is God's medicine for the covenantally sick people. We need to administer that medicine in time for healing, should that be God's will. This means that we need as much contact with the wayward sinner as possible. It means that the whole church needs to take part in praying for the salvation of the sinner who has hardened himself.

The procedure we as Reformed churches have used for a long time is quite simple. In keeping with the scriptural given, the methods are prescribed for the consistory in the church order (found in the back of the Psalter Hymnal). For a confessing member the preliminary step is silent censure. It is silent in the sense that it is not published. The wayward member is asked not to attend the Lord's Supper and he cannot answer the questions at his child's baptism, nor can he vote in church matters. If this preliminary discipline does not help, the first public step of discipline is taken and the prayers of the congregation are asked for. The choice of mentioning the sinner's name is up to the consistory. After this, if there is no change, Classis is asked for approval to continue the procedure. When this has been received, the congregation is once again acquainted with the sin of the member, he is mentioned by name and prayers are requested. Should there be no change or repentance, the last step is the setting of the date for excommunication, usually about a month after the announcement. The procedure for members by baptism is the same with omission of the preliminary step.

How much all of this hurts the church! How hard it is for the parents! How often all of us are party to and guilty of alienation that often is part of the total picture. We need to be so much in prayer that God will preserve us as his people.

When one of the members is in the hospital as the church we pray. If there is serious sickness, we may even call a special prayer service, as was done in Second Church recently. We have no difficulty at all saying in public the precise nature of the terrible sickness. Yet, how much worse is the terrible cancer of covenant-breaking! A person's eternal salvation and destiny hangs in the balance, humanly speaking. And often we as church people, prefer to be silent. In my perspective we need to be more active in applying loving, sensitive, correcting discipline.

Rev. R. Stienstra, Trinity Chr. Ref. Church, Abbotsford, BC

Church News

Christian Reformed

Declined

—to Brockville, ON, Rev. Gregg Martin of Dunnville, ON.

Free Reformed

Called

—to Fort Langley, BC, Rev. C. Bos of Chatham, ON.

Declined

—to Dundas, ON, Rev. A. Van-Heteren of Werkendam, The Netherlands.

—to St. Thomas, ON, Rev. C.A. Schouls of Mitchell, ON.

In gratitude to Knox, Woodstock

On November 16th we joined in a very special worship service with the Covenant Church, and members of the Knox Presbyterian Church. It was a service of praise to God for working in the hearts of his children to reach out to one another in love. In that service both our churches presented a bronze plaque to the Knox Church commemorating the fact that they took us in after our building was destroyed by the tornado.

The second service of that Sunday was held in the evening, in the Knox Church. It was the last time that we

PRESS PARADE

worshipped in Knox Church and made use of the hospitality of our brothers and sisters of Knox. We thank the Lord for them since, they have opened their hearts to us. We will always thankfully recall how they have ministered to us in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In keeping with this the plaque which we presented to them is inscribed: "Dedicated with gratitude to the Knox Presbyterian Church for its Christian love and hospitality to the Maranatha and Covenant Chr. Ref. Churches after their place of worship had been destroyed by a tornado on August 7, 1979. 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me . . . As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me' " (Matthew 25:35, 40).

On Thursday, November 20, we held the opening ceremony and dedication of our church. It was an evening of great rejoicing and thankfulness for all that the Lord has done for us.

Commemorative plates with a picture of the new church were presented to persons who spent considerable time working on the new church and to all the members of the Board of Administration. To the members of the congregation they will also be available at the price of \$3.50 per plate.

Thanks be to God for our new church building!

Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, Woodstock, ON

Waterloo stresses the family unit

Christian family seminars for the whole family are planned for 1981 starting in January and meeting each second Sunday of the month for three sessions. On those three Sundays families will meet before the evening service for a two hour session concluded with a common meal and worship service.

The program is designed to help all family members (6 years old and up), better understand themselves and their family and give them a greater sense of their family strengths. The total impact is to provide a positive, enjoyable family experience from a learning perspective which highlights basic Christian values for the family.

The program involves the participation of total families without excluding childless couples, with handouts, at-home reading and in-class group participation during the three two-hour sessions. Families work in class, mainly as units, but some exercises mix family members or join two families together.

Throughout the course, families are provided with the opportunity to experience their similarity to other families, as well as their uniqueness, in-

creasing their understanding and appreciation of their own family.

Waterloo (ON)
Chr. Ref. Church

"Human Relations" in public education: a negative perspective

During the discussion at the congregational meeting about the Human Relations Course, it became known that the consistory had made a stand against this course as it is now taught. This stand was made by means of a letter which said, in part, that " . . . we are especially concerned by the prominence of humanistic philosophy and the absence of Judeo-Christian ethics and beliefs. Belief in God and Jesus Christ and adherence to the Word of God as a guide for living appear to have a place of very low and dubious prominence in this course. Surely, the young citizens of this "Christian" nation ought to be raised with at least a familiarity of the respect for the good and healthy Judeo-Christian ethics and beliefs which have always been appreciated in the Dominion of Canada.

"Unless a Human Relations Course be written that reflects Christian principles and God's moral order, our opinion is that the public school system would be better off without such a curriculum. We trust that you are as concerned about the damage that this curriculum will undoubtedly cause our children and Canadian society. At the same time, we encourage you to write a new Human Relations Curriculum that will respect and utilize the guidelines that God has given us for our interpersonal relations. We recommend that various religious leaders be asked to join the authors of a new Human Relations Course. The Consistory."

First Chr. Ref. Church, Orillia, ON

Accountability and the Lord's Supper

Your consistory wishes to have your input concerning a certain matter, the supervision of the Lord's Supper.

You are all aware that all non-members of the congregation are required to request permission from the consistory before they may partake of the supper. The reason for this requirement is that we understand that the elders, as spiritual overseers in the church, have a responsibility to the Lord to make sure, as much as possible, that only believers in good standing in the church of Jesus Christ join in eating at the Lord's table.

This understanding of scripture with regard to the

Lord's Supper is called "close communion" in contrast with "open communion," in which there is no supervision over the Lord's Supper and where no one will prevent a person from participating.

The Lord's table is sacred, meant only for believers who are living in proper relationship with Jesus and his church. Each individual is finally responsible for himself, but elders also have a responsibility to Christ to see to it that the Lord's table does not become defiled by the presence of unbelievers and those who are not living in harmony with God's will.

What you may not be so aware of is that after every Lord's Supper celebration, the consistory records who has or who has not participated in the supper.

God's people have been taught to examine themselves before they partake of the Lord's Supper. After that examination, some do not feel inclined to partake. Perhaps there is some difficulty in their spiritual life, perhaps some difficulty at home, perhaps some wrong relationship with a brother or sister in the Lord, perhaps there is some sin. Consequently they do not attend.

The elders note your abstaining and if it happens once or twice, we understand that you have been able to work through your problem on your own. If you do not partake 3, 4 or more times, we sense that something needs attention or help in your life. Consequently, there is reason for a visit from your pastor or elder, so that you may receive some help or guidance in your struggle. In this way too, we strive to keep watch over your souls and encourage you in your Christian life.

Our problem is that the congregation is getting so big (250 confessing members), that it is hard to remember after the service who did and who did not partake of the Lord's Supper — or simply who was there. To help us in our task, we propose to follow the example of some other congregations who have each confessing member sign a card at each communion that says something like: "Today I took the privilege of participating in the Lord's Supper." The little cards will be collected (in an offering plate) and after the service the elders will know exactly the participation in the Lord's Supper.

Our goal is simply to be faithful overseers and shepherds in the church for which Jesus died.

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Of course we ate tortillas!

by Dr. Dick L. Van Halsema

Dr. Van Halsema is president of Reformed Bible College, Grand Rapids, MI. He introduced Mexican Summer Training Session in 1968.

"Of course, we ate tortillas," Jan insisted. Several college friends had come to her room and were asking about her summer in Mexico. They were in a fun-loving mood. One of them was joking with her.

"So, you went to Mexico this summer? Where'd you get your tan — in Acapulco? I'll bet you never got close enough to Mexicans to touch one! You probably never even ate a tortilla!"

"Of course, we ate tortillas," Jan repeated, "... and refried beans and tamales and all kinds of things."

"Well, you must have gotten sick long before your first days in a Mexican home were over," her friends retorted. "And how did you manage to smile when 'Montezuma's revenge' was tying up your stomach in knots?"

Jan didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Her friends were so ignorant about Mexico. They pictured it as a place of burros and sombreros, of hot peppers and chill con carne. Little did they know that this country, with a population of 70 million people, has the world's largest city — Mexico, or that it has petroleum reserves about equal to those of Saudi Arabia, snow-capped mountains, and a great variety of people speaking 175 different languages or dialects.

What did these college girls know about the pyramids of Teotihuacan, the castles of Palenque, and the temples of Tenochtitlan — all built before Hernan Cortez and the Spaniards came in 1519?

"Listen, amigas," Jan replied, "I got to love the tortillas and beans our mamacita served. And we hardly ever got sick. You have the same weird notions about Mexico that I had before I went on STS. I'm glad I went because I found out what Mexico really is like. What's more..."

"Yes, what's more, senorita?" Jan's friends couldn't resist needling her. "There's a lot more to tell."

"First, we didn't even get to Acapulco. That's where tourists go. Second, the only place I went swimming was in the pool at language school — and that was great! We had two hours of Bible study in the morning, four or five hours of Spanish class every weekday plus special lectures, and lots of assigned reading in books about missions and culture. You'd enjoy afternoon siesta with a plunge in the pool and the volleyball game before supper just as much as we did!"

Jan felt that the good-natured ribbing from her friends was subsiding. They were getting

curious.

"All right, Jan," said one of the girls. "All kidding aside, why did you go on this STS thing in the first place?"

Jan was delighted. The Lord was opening the way for her to tell these girls what she actually felt about her summer in Mexico.

"I ought to go back a few years," Jan began. "I was brought up in a Christian home, and my parents sent me to a Christian high school. I loved getting involved in all sorts of activities, but I went to church mainly because my folks expected me to go. One time they invited a missionary from Nigeria to stay at our house when she spoke at our church. She was a dear one, but she didn't 'turn me on.' I probably wasn't interested in what she had to say. After meeting her, I resolved never to become a missionary!"

"During my freshman year at college, I had a suitemate from Thailand. Her parents are missionaries there. She was a great kid — friendly to everybody, dependable as the day is long. She got a lot more out of her courses than I did — even though I may be brighter than she is. One thing seemed a bit too much: she read her Bible every day. That got to me at first. But then we became close friends."

"I found out that in Thailand most of the people aren't Christians — they're Buddhists. Thousands of villages are without a single Christian. I was surprised to find out that half of the world's population lives in Asia. Most of these people never heard anyone teach God's Word or show the love of Christ. My suitemate said that's why her parents have been in Thailand for almost twenty years — and why she plans to go back as a missionary after she finishes college."

Jan paused. "Do you want me to stop?" she asked. "Keep going," her friends replied. "But what's all this got to do with your summer in Mexico?"

"O.K.," Jan said, "I'll get to the point. My suitemate from Thailand got me thinking about more of the world than my little corner of it. Last fall, I met Jerry Van Dyke — you know, the tall guy on the soccer team. He had been in Mexico with Summer Training Session, put on by Reformed Bible College. I knew him from our freshman year here at school, but there was something different about him last fall. So I asked him: 'You seem different from last year. How come?'"

"Jerry answered, 'I went on Mexico STS this summer. A fellow who went two years ago put me up to it. At first, I was frustrated something fierce. I couldn't stand the cockroaches. Two hours a day of Bible study just about drove me up the wall. I could hardly wait to get to my field training assignment. Those Mexican Christians didn't

know how lucky they'd be with me telling them how to run their churches!'"

Jan's friends didn't interrupt, so she went on. "But was Jerry ever surprised! He fell in love with Mexico — never mind the bugs. He warmed up to the daily Bible study — finding out how much he had to learn. And when he and his partner got to Peto for their field work, they got the biggest surprise of all. They met dear Christian people who had no cars, no indoor plumbing, and little or no schooling. But these people knew God a lot better than Jerry and his friend did, and they showed it by their love!"

The girls wondered what Jan would tell them next. After a pause she said: "I couldn't get Jerry and my suitemate from Thailand out of my mind. I started thinking about what was most important to me. I knew that I wanted a more meaningful relationship to Christ. I also wanted to know what it might be like to serve Him in another culture. I decided to find out. I applied for STS."

Jan told the girls that she contacted RBC, filled out the application forms, and received help from her church. She described her first impressions of Mexico City early in June: new sights, unfamiliar sounds, strange foods, a language she couldn't understand — and people everywhere! She talked about the STS emphasis upon personal Bible study and worship and about Spanish language school. Before she went home in August, she and her team mate had spent several weeks with a Mexican Christian family in Campeche and helped with vacation Bible school in their church. She admitted her sur-

prise in discovering how contented she could feel in a new place once the strangeness of a different culture began to wear off.

"But, Jan," her friends persisted, "Didn't you get your fill of missionaries this summer? Why in the world would you go back? What did you get out of those weeks in Mexico?"

Jan smiled. "I discovered something about happiness, first of all. I used to look for what I could get out of a friendship or an experience. I figured that the more I could get for myself, the happier I'd be. But those dear Mexican believers taught me what I never realized before: the more I give, the happier I am!"

"You asked me about missionaries, too. Until I went to STS, I thought that a missionary was a super-good Christian who went around witnessing for Jesus from morning to night. In Mexico this summer, my notion about missionaries was changed in a hurry. They're so human! They've got to wash dishes, fix cars that won't run, and study hard to learn the language just like anyone else. And they don't always get along with each other, either. But the love

of Christ is uppermost in their lives — and this shows, loud and clear. D'you know what I think about missionaries? They're ordinary people with an extraordinary 'tolerance for ambiguity' (as our teacher said in cross-culture orientation class). They're men and women just like us who've decided to be what Christ wants them to be and to go where He wants them to go.

"One more thing. Lots of the 600 or more kids who've gone on STS since it started in 1968 have gone into missions. They're all over the world by now, working with different churches and agencies — teachers, pilots, translators, church planters, nurses, evangelists."

"I'll let you in on a secret. When I finish college, I want to go into missions, too!"

That seemed to surprise Jan's friends. But she continued: "This summer, I was shocked to hear that no missionaries have gone to over half of the world's people. D'you realize that it will take 540,000 evangelists to teach them about Christ? That was enough for me. I said, 'Lord, if you'll use me as a missionary, I'll go.'"

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BETWEEN Us

by Phyllis Kroeker

Gifts

"I can't accept your gifts," Junie said, rising from her chair with a dark look on her face.

"I'm sorry," she said, "but I feel it's my right not to accept a gift."

Marge's face fell and her colour rose. Embarrassed, she stuck her hand into Junie's tote bag and pulled out the packages she'd hidden there earlier.

"Then I'll take back the sausage and cream puffs I slipped in here, too."

Marge set them beside a length of ribbon, the sight of which, sticking out of her bag had offended Junie.

Marge was hurt, but in the face of their long friendship, she understood. Junie's pride had been hurt lately by well-meaning in-laws, who treated her like a poor relative. Their gifts were intricacies in a web of outstanding emotional debts, and Junie was bleary-eyed from hunching over illegible ledgers piling up in her heart and mind. Her sense of fair play and been stretched to breaking, and she couldn't cope any more.

The ledgers are never straight.

Unlike the neatly pencilled figures in an accountant's books, our accounts with each other consist of half-remembered numbers. Some are blurred by tears or even blood. Some blink sombrelly, forever, like little neon lights in our minds: "Past Due."

Twenty-year-old Amy was job-hunting in the city. She was embarrassed to find herself broke at the subway station. Proud but desperate, she pulled the morning paper from under her arm and offered it to two elderly ladies.

"I seem to have lost my tokens. Would you be interested in exchanging a token for a newspaper?"

The ladies smiled, and with understanding in their eyes, made the exchange. How shall Amy repay those kind women?

A month ago a neighbour looked out of her kitchen window to see a young woman lying ill on her lawn. When my neighbour approached her, the woman turned her away, bravely, proudly.

"I'm all right," she said. "It's nothing. Thank you." She left, worried, to wait.

Later, the woman's boyfriend knocked on her door, apologetic and panicky. My neighbour drove them to the hospital, comforting them along the way. How will the couple repay my neighbour for her caring?

Transient Tom appeared at Jean's door on a sunny summer day. "Could I mow your lawn for you?" he asked.

Jean took in his faded, ragged blue jeans, worn tennis shoes and his unshaven face.

"I'm sorry," she said. "Two young fellows do it with power mowers."

His eyes flashed an appeal: "I'm desperate."

"All I have here is an old hand mower," she said.

"Let me see it," he said. She pointed to the side of the house, and he went to take a look. She hesitated at the barely-open door.

When he reappeared, she told him, "I couldn't afford to pay you to mow this huge property with that old thing."

"I'll take anything," Tom replied.

"Why don't you mow three dollars worth?"

Tom looked delighted, and set himself determinedly to mowing.

An hour passed. Tom had done more than three dollars worth. Jean made him a nice lunch: sandwiches, potato chips and freshie. She set up a lawnchair and snack table under a tree, and invited him to have lunch.

Two more hours passed. The lawn was half done. Why wouldn't the man go away? Jean packed him a lunch and sent him on his way, feeling she hadn't paid him enough at all.

With sunset, Jean prepared the house for the night. As she drew curtains, she heard the lawn mower. She peered out to see Tom steering it along the further reaches of the property with a fierceness that half frightened her.

She couldn't pay him. The agreement had been ridiculously overextended.

There was rage in his shoulders as he worked. He hunched desperately over the handles of the machine. He marched as if under a whip, back and forth across the half-lit lawn.

Transient Tom disappeared then, for a while. Jean saw him from time to time, splitting wood down the street, and washing windows around the corner.

One day, he passed her on the street dressed like a dandy. He wore a beige panama hat, a casual suit and cowboy boots, looking like a rodeo rider.

Tom hadn't murdered anybody. He was not driven by drugs, or rage, or fear. He was an alcoholic. He spent his nights in local pubs. He had fought a losing battle right under Jean's nose. His weapons had been mowers, axes and squeegies. Money had appeared from somewhere, and Tom caved in, re-treating to the bars.

Jean had been afraid to give, and afraid to take. She had feared the upshots of things; the final accounting.

Gifts must be given and taken with simplicity and humility. They must not be confused with requirements and amounts owing. Gifts are a manifestation of grace, and a mystery.



PASTORAL COUNSELING

By Rev. Ralph Heynen

How many children?

In rather bold headlines our daily paper recently made the statement that the American family should limit the number of their offspring to two. In the book, *Standing Room Only*, which appeared about ten years ago, it was suggested that there should be an average of 2.7 children per family. The frightening thought is presented that if families are not limited rather drastically, there will be a lack of food and a lack of space to live in another decade or two. There will be *standing room only*!

This presents a number of problems. Recently I came across some people who are bothered by this. A young mother said the other day: "We have five wonderful children; we're very proud of them. But when I read the statistics today, I almost feel guilty." This seems to be a common feeling among many young couples today. When I talk with people before marriage this is a subject that is often discussed. How many children are they going to have? For some, each child is carefully planned. Fortunately, it doesn't always work out exactly the way they plan and intend it. But some try to consciously work towards limiting the size of their family. There may be certain advantages to this.

There is something else that is more dangerous today. There are a number of young couples who say: "We're not going to have any children at all." Take for example, the young couple I have in mind. They are both college graduates; he has done some university work. They said: It isn't fair to bring a child into a world like this, with all the evils, the terrors that surround us, facing another draft... are we going to bring a child into

the world just to be cannon fodder, to be blown to bits by an atomic weapon? Or they say: It isn't fair to bring a child into the world with all the financial difficulties that we face and the crises that lie ahead of us.

Whenever I talk to people like that, I tell them that I can understand how they feel. I know how parents feel when they bring a child into this world. I know how grandparents feel when they see their grandchildren growing up in this age. But how do we know if one of our children or grandchildren might be the one to make some kind of contribution that will make this whole world a better place to live? How do we know but that one of ours might make a tremendous difference in the world?

Parents ought not to feel guilty when they have five or six youngsters. A family I visited the other day had seven — and then they adopted a handicapped child. They were able to provide a good home; they could give these children what they needed. They gave them the kind of love that parents ought to give. Why shouldn't they spread their love over a large group, rather than to have just one or two children?

There are some people who cannot adequately care for even three children. They don't have a stable emotional setting for them. These are often the parents who manage to have six or seven. It's good to analyze our own situations and plan accordingly. If Christian parents are able to care for a good-sized family and both mother and father feel comfortable in such a situation, I don't believe they ought to feel guilty. The Bible often stresses that a family of many sons and daughters is to be considered a blessing. I'm not sure

that things should be different today. Although, among the Israelites there was a different situation — they wanted to build their nations and restore Israel as a people and they were encouraged to have large families.

Being part of a large family can be a real advantage. I was brought up in a good sized family. The interaction between brothers and sisters can be one of the finest training grounds in constructive living. I've always been grateful for the fact that I have five brothers and a sister. But I feel it's important to stress that it's not the quantity of children, but the quality that counts. Some people can take care of a family of eight, but others should limit themselves to two or three. It all depends on the situation.

But no one in the state or the community, or the social realm should tell people just how many children they can have. This became a problem in India when they tried to limit the population by telling the people that they couldn't have more than just so many children and after they had had three children they had to have an operation performed so that no more children could be born in that home. This led to lots of problems.

We should think in terms of the health of the family, both the parents and the children. There are some mothers who have emotional breakdowns every time they have a baby. Some need repeated hospitalization. I've seen mothers, again and again, after having a baby. They have this problem and the doctor would tell them they ought not to have more children because of this. Other mothers have severe physical problems with child-bearing. Such factors can

well be a determining factor when planning the size of the family. Others have severe financial problems. Another mouth to feed would complicate the situation even more. There can be personal reasons for limiting the family size. Good common sense dictates the use of caution and healthy ways of living together as a family.

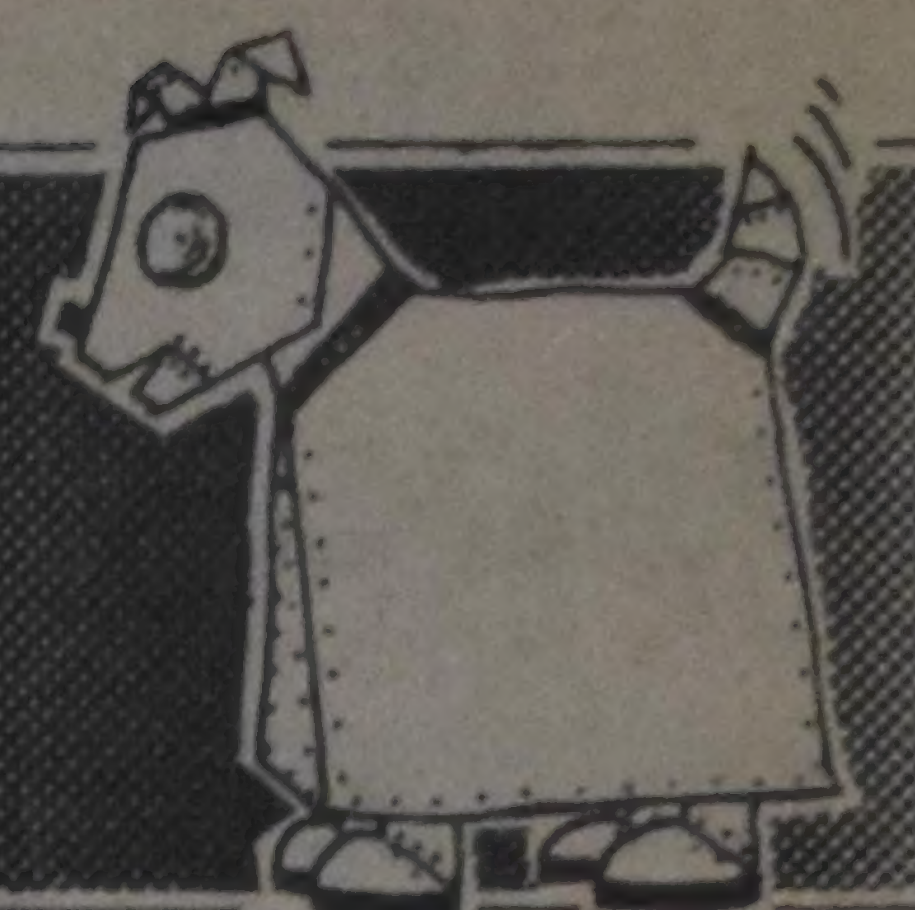
There is also a lot of discussion on the matter of abortion. Much of this discussion has gone far beyond the standard that is set by God. Both in His creation ordinance and in the guidelines given in the New Testament, we find that each child who is brought into this world has a right to be loved, to be wanted, to be accepted and to be nurtured in the fear of the Lord. It's up to Christian parents to determine this in the light of the teachings of the Bible. Abortion is not the way to limit our families. These children have immortal souls. Before they're born, after they're born. That brings us an overwhelming responsibility. We can't do it alone. But we can rely on the gracious covenantal promises of our God who says that He will be our God and the God of our children.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

Mental health is not just the absence of distressing symptoms; it's a state of mental well-being in which the person is adjusted to himself, to the world about him, to other people, to the social environment, to his work and to his God. This means that mental health is something positive and that's what we need!

Canis, the robot

Part 2



by Lloyd Rang

Chapter II Can.

The next day was unbearable for Eric. William was going to unveil his invention after school. Math seemed like hours, literature endless, but worse yet was the last subject, History. It seemed as if the teacher had inflicted this as punishment upon Eric's intense curiosity. At last, however, prayer was said and the students burst out of the room like a flock of mad geese. Eric and William, too, would have been with that flock had not a shrill, familiar voice resounded in their ears.

"Errric! William! I would like to see you at my desk immediately."

Both boys stopped dead in their tracks and turned around. Seated on her dictator's throne was Miss Hellinga. It was no wonder she had remained a miss all these years. She was the perfect example of a fussy, old schoolteacher.

She wore thin gold-rimmed glasses and had a long wrinkly face. Her hair was done up in a high bun which remained there only because it was supported by a meriad of pins. From her eyes one could sense that she was the school's strictest executor of discipline.

The two boys before her felt as men condemned to a firing squad. Eric was shivering in his running shoes, prepared for the blast of words that was coming. However, the words did not come in that fiery blast. Instead a calm voice said, "Boys, I want you to know that I am not handing you a detention at this time, only a warning. If anything out of the ordinary occurs because of your so-called invention, I'm holding you responsible."

Both boys breathed a deep sigh of relief. This wasn't so bad after all now that they had escaped the clutches of Miss Hellinga. Then, as if on signal, William replied, "No, ma'am. We'll see to it that nothing ill becomes of the school."

And with that they were off. Outside the school Eric said, "Whew, what a close call! I thought we were in for it like the time when you blew up the school's chemistry set."

"I was younger then. Besides, we got out alive, right? So it can't be all that bad." And that ended the discussion.

When they arrived at the DeVos' house, William took Eric to the shed. There Eric waited while William went in to get his invention. Eric grew

impatient, occasionally twiddling his thumbs, whistling, or pacing back and forth.

Finally his waiting was rewarded when William came out with his invention wrapped in canvas. It wasn't very large although William showed some strain in lifting it. He promptly set his burden on the patio and said, "Would you like to say anything on this momentous occasion, Eric?"

"Yes," replied his friend, "Through many toils and troubles this young

Sinbad."

"But how does it work, William? How can it chase Sinbad when it has no wheels?"

"I see that I must explain," replied William. "First, the radar picks up Sinbad or any other cat. Then it checks its speed, location, and surroundings. If the cat's speed is slow and a bird is near, the computer brain sends information to the guidance system and..."

"Please, say no more! I should have known not to ask you! Give it to me in

name. Can you think of one suitable for this occasion?"

After some profound thinking Eric suggested, "Well, we can call him W.E.D."

What does that stand for?"

"William's Electronic Disaster," replied Eric rolling over in gales of laughter, after which he received a swat from William who only appeared to be annoyed.

"Seriously, I mean a really good name, one that really fits the occasion. I'm thinking of something like..."

"Something like S.J.P.P.E.R.," boomed a voice behind them.

The two whirled around and found themselves facing Mrs. DeVos. Her eyes wandered from the startled boys to the mechanical dog behind them. A furrowed brow looked over the machine with the intensity of a hawk. Slowly the questioning look turned into a sharp scorn.

"William Randall DeVos! What have you made now? Get that... that automated tree chopper out of my sight before I smash it!"

"But Mom, it's not an automated tree chopper."

"That was your last invention," murmured Eric under his breath.

"No buts, young man," replied mom. Now come in for supper." And with that she started for the house.

Both boys sat dejected and sad. The newest invention had been cancelled. The proto-type of something great wouldn't even get a trial run.

Suddenly William jumped up and shouted, "I've got it!"

"Got what?" said Eric and Mrs. DeVos together.

It's name! We'll name it Canis!" shouted William excitedly.

"Why don't we just call it Can?" Eric suggested timidly.

"Super! We'll program it to..."

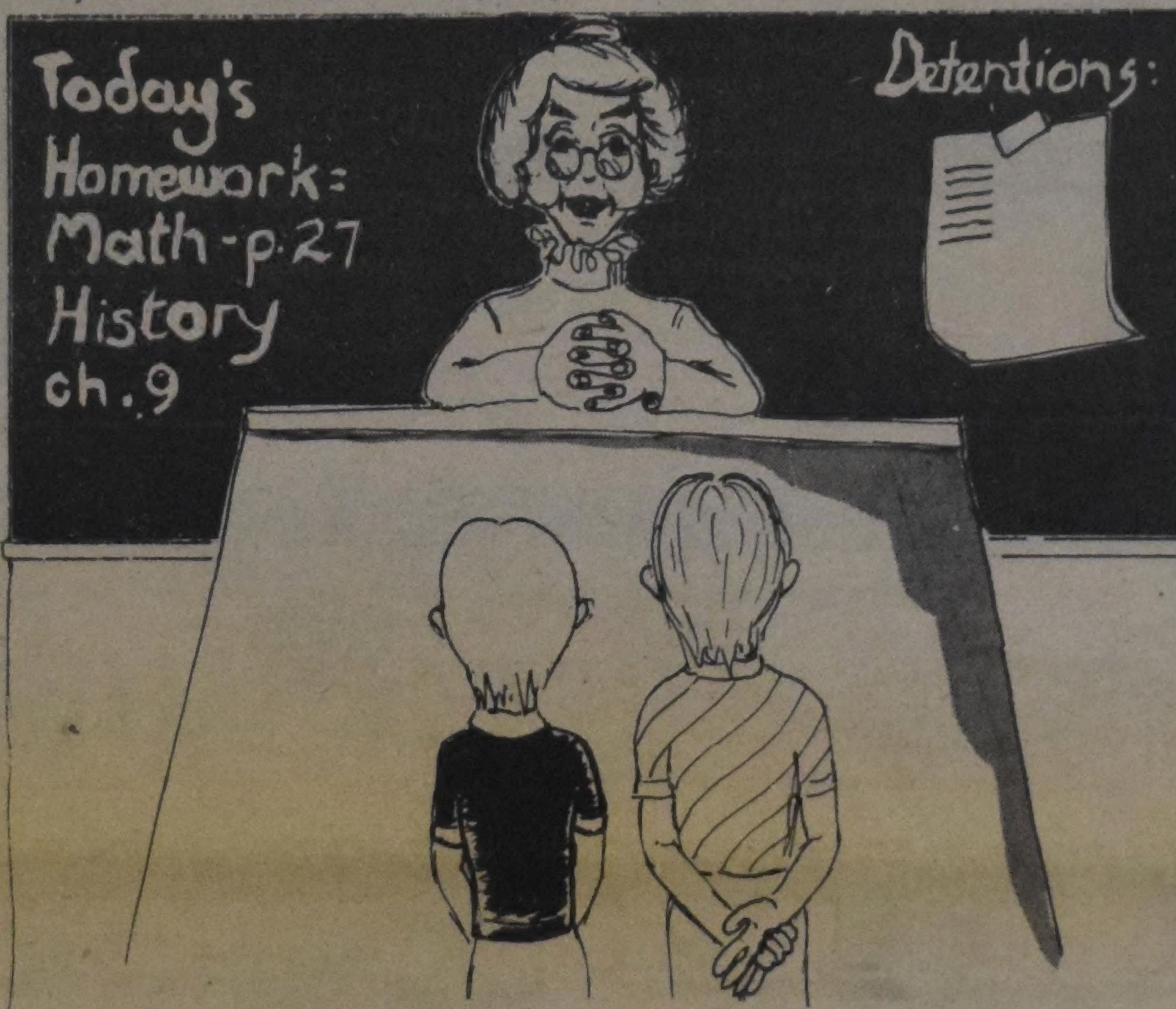
"That's all very unnecessary as it will be in the junk yard as of tomorrow," interrupted Mrs. DeVos.

"Wait! Can't we even show how it works, Mom?" pleaded William. "Please?"

Mrs. DeVos thought for a moment and then replied, "Very well, turn it on."

William knelt at his machine and flipped the 'on' switch. When nothing happened, Mrs. DeVos just smiled and turned away. But suddenly Eric yelled, "Look out, Can's doing something!"

Continued next week...



inventor has once more come up on top. Therefore I take the liberty to..."

"Skip it!" snapped William. And with that he promptly yanked the canvas off his invention.

Exposed to the wide world stood a most extraordinary device. It was quite large and shiny except for several places which were covered with black rubber. Its metal, sloping sides reached almost to the ground. It had both a mechanical tail and head. On this head were two small radar discs which reflected the sunlight in such a way that they looked like shining eyes watching the setting sun.

Eric stood open-mouthed, staring at his friend's latest brainstorm. He then murmured, "It... it... looks almost like a dog."

"It is a dog, Eric, a mechanical dog. This is the dog that I'm sending after

Seventh Grade talk," begged the confused Eric.

"O.K. First it 'sees' the cat, the bird, and where they are. Then it goes to where the two are. Understand?" said the exasperated William. Eric then nodded his head vigorously, but he still seemed not to understand. He walked over to the mechanical dog and ran his hand over its cold, metal sides. After some careful studying he remarked, "O.K. Fox, what makes this baby tick?"

"He runs on solar batteries," replied William.

There was a lengthy pause as Eric once more ran his fingers over the robot and then moodily sat back in a lawn chair mumbling and groaning to himself, "Trouble, trouble, trouble."

Just then William rent the silence and said, "Say now, Eric. Our pet needs a

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Long aisles of torrid tar whiz by,
Parched fields are left behind,
"As you surge upwards to the clouds,
Tell me, what do you find?"

"As you mount higher, higher still,
Full throttle, bound to soar,
Is it sweet music in your ears
To hear that engine roar?"

As there you hang, 'twixt heaven and
earth,
Where moody winds oft play,
And ships of cotton make their home,
What day-dreams drift your way?

When borne aloft on wings of steel
'Midst charts and gauges nigh,
Where human error might spell death,
Tell me, why do you fly?"

You seem amused, but speak in awe
About the thrill you feel —
"My dreams, my hopes, my thoughts up
there
No living soul can steal."

"No cares or pressures hound me there,
Life's frenzied pace I flee,
Here's a domain, where I can roam,
My spirit's chains set free.

Perched on the highway of the skies,
As eagles on their nest,
I marvel at the world beneath,
All nature seems at rest.

The Master's magic brush blends in
Each shade of rock and tree,
Not one small stroke is out of place —
Perfection! Harmony!

This Master of the Universe
Who'll soothe a swollen sea,
Will He not safely guide this craft
And my Chief Pilot be?"

I envy your unquestioned faith,
The grand escape you've found,
And so, free spirit, "Take your flight
While I wait on the ground!

Judy Lunshof
Hamilton, ON

The wings of prayer

Just close your eyes and open your
heart,
And feel your worries and cares depart,
Just yield yourself to the Father above
And let Him hold you secure in His
Love —
For life on earth grows more involved
With endless problems that can't be
solved —
But God only asks us to do our best,
Then He will "take over" and finish the
rest —
So when you are tired, discouraged and
blue,
There's always one door that is open to
you —
And that is the door to "The House of
Prayer"
And you'll find God waiting to meet you

there,
And "The House Of Prayer" is no farther
away
Then the quiet spot where you kneel and
pray —
For the heart is a temple when God is
there
As we place ourselves in His loving
care,
And He hears every prayer and answers
each one
When we pray in His name "Thy Will
Be Done" —
And the burdens that seemed too heavy
to bear,
Are lifted away on "The Wings Of
Prayer."

Cobie Blockland,
Hamilton, ON

Pharisee

Striding through the filth
Of God's own city;
Ignoring the cries of those
Who ask for your pity.

Of the lepers, the blinds and
the mutes.

Refusing to listen to the Son
Who is more than Moses or
Abraham;
Ridiculing His Words of
wisdom
For you've never asked for a
Lamb.

Exercising your religious
duties
In God's Holy Temple;
Thanking and praising the Lord
He made you the example.


Bragging of Abraham and
Moses
In your religious disputes;
Adding ceaselessly to the
burden

Teach and instruct me, o Lord
To allow you my broken heart
So I'll never boast of anything
Done on my part.

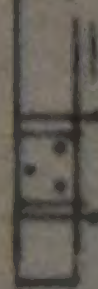
You are my eternal King
Because Jesus became a Lamb
Dumb in front of His shearers
Finished for Ever! Amen.

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Onder Ons

Ons milieu

Je kunt tegenwoordig haast geen krant of tijdschrift in handen krijgen of er staat wel iets in te lezen over milieu-verontreiniging. Het Engelse „environment” en „pollution” spreekt misschien een betere taal, omdat we met deze woorden zo vertrouwd zijn geraakt.

Alhoewel ik me er wel van bewust was dat het met die „environment” niet zo goed zat, ben ik er toch van geschrokken toen ik wat meer studie ging maken van dit onderwerp, meer uitvoerig genoemd de studie van ecology.

Wat is nu feitelijk ecology en waar komt het woord vandaan. Ecology komt van het Grieksch woord oikos” wat betekent huis en van logia, de condities van dat huis. Het is vanzelfsprekend dat een huis bewoond wordt. Die bewoners kunnen mensen zijn maar ook dieren en planten. Maar je kunt in dat huis alleen maar leven als het aan zekere voorwaarden voldoet. Als er geen waterleiding of centrale verwarming is, dan is het moeilijk om in dat huis te leven. En als er geen zuurstof aanwezig zou zijn, dan is wonen zelfs onmogelijk geworden.

Je zou kunnen zeggen er moet een zeker evenwicht, een zekere balans, zijn tussen het huis en de woningconditie. Een goede definitie van ecology zou zijn: een goede „relatie” tussen huis en bewoner.

We weten heel goed als een zakenrelatie of een familie-relatie niet meer werkt zoals het behoort te zijn, dan is er iets verkeerd en raken we op een „dood spoor.”

Maar een goede relatie ontstaat zomaar niet in een paar dagen. Daar moet soms jaren aan gewerkt of voor gestudeerd worden. Je moet eerst de voorwaarden weten die nodig zijn om zulk een relatie te ontwikkelen of te vormen. En het zijn juist die voorwaarden die zulk een diepe betekenis hebben is de studie van ecology. De relaties tussen een huis en zijn bewoners is totaal afhankelijk van de voorwaarden. Als een relatie begint met een verkeerde voorwaarde of als die voorwaarden niet meer nagekomen worden, dan is er iets verkeerd met die relatie. En zo is het nu ook met ons milieu met onze „environment” en met ons die er in wonen.

Om te kunnen leven hebben we zuurstof nodig, dit geldt voor al de levende wezens die in dat milieu leven, maar als die zuurstof vervuld wordt door vergiftige gassen dan kan die levensvatbaarheid bedreigd worden. We kunnen nu een stap verder gaan en zeggen dat ieder levend wezen niet kan leven zonder een gezond milieu.

Bovenstaande punten zijn momenteel zeer kritiek. Mensen, bomen en dieren zijn vandaag niet meer tevreden met de omstandigheden van

het hedendaagse milieu. Veel planten en dieren species zijn reeds gelimiteerd als een gevolg van dat milieu. Er zijn voorspellingen, dat, als we doorgaan met milieu-vervuiling we in de toekomst niet langer meer in dat milieu kunnen leven.

Waarom zijn de condities zo kritiek? Om de eenvoudige reden dat iedere relatie welke verbroken is zal eindigen in een ramp.

Dit begint al in het gezinsleven. De communicatie tussen ouders en kinderen moet in evenwicht zijn. Is dat niet het geval, dan gaat er iets verkeerd. En zo is het nu ook met ons milieu, ook hier gaat er iets verkeerd als het evenwicht tussen het milieu en de bewoners is verbroken. Als je iets uit het milieu weghaalt moet je het er ook weer terug brengen. Hebben we dat gedaan de laatste jaren, en is het goed wat we er voor in de plaats gebracht hebben?

We weten heel goed dat een medaille twee kanten heeft. Men zegt wel eens dat een menselijk gezicht twee kanten heeft. De een is de lachende de andere de huilende. Ook in de milieu treffen we dat aan. Aan de ene kant de glimlach: Mensen, bloemen vogels, maar aan de andere kant de tranen, „milieu verontreiniging.”

In Genesis 1:31 lezen we dat „God zag wat Hij gemaakt had en zie het was zeer goed.” Dit was de glimlach, dit was het begin van Zijn schepping: de bloemen, de dieren en dan als de hoogste bekroning: de mens. Dat was paradijs op zijn best. Dat was de glimlach. Maar de glimlach is veranderd in tranen en het lachen in huilen. Dit zijn niet mijn woorden, maar de woorden van vele boeken en tijdschriften en weekbladen die ik bestudeerd heb in verband met dit onderwerp. Ik wil sommige van deze vindingen weer geven.

We hebben met het paradijs gespeeld, en nu we het verloren hebben zijn we er van overtuigd dat het inderdaad een paradijs was. „Niet alleen hebben de mensen de natuurlijk vegetatie niet met rust gelaten maar zij hebben ook het milieu veranderd en vaak in hun eigen voordeel.”

Montreal (Canada's grootste stad) gooit ongeveer 500 miljoen gallons afgewerkte fabrieksstoffen in de rivieren. „Men heeft berekend dat iedere kubieke voet afval ongeveer vijf en zeventig duizend vliegen oplevert, alsmede ratten, muizen, muggen en kakkerlakken.” We maken riolen van onze oceanen. We hakken de bomen van de wereldbossen vlugger, dan dat ze weer herplant kunnen worden. In de laatste tien jaren, verloren we 30% van de bossen van de ivoor kust in Afrika. De tropische oerwouden verminderen onder menselijk ingrijpen met vijftig

acres iedere minuut. Als een gevolg van „Acid rain” zijn vier duizend meren nu dood in Ontario. Het Canadese leger helpt families die moeten verhuizen vanwege de dodelijke gassen in hun omgeving. De milieu-verontreiniging kost de Canadese Economie ieder jaar twee biljoen dollar.

De genoemde gegevens zijn de tranen, het is de huilende

zijde van ons milieu-waarin we leven. Toen ik dit allemaal las dacht ik, „Wat heeft men met ons milieu gedaan?”

Maar op de een of andere manier heb ik ook teveel bomen gehakt, en ook ik heb meegedaan aan verontreiniging van het milieu. Daarom heb ik oorlog verklaard, maar geen oorlog van vernietiging maar een heilige oorlog. Doch niemand

kan een oorlog verklaren zonder soldaten en zonder amunitie. En daarom vraag ik om soldaten, ik kom u vragen of u me helpen wilt om deze oorlog van destructie tegen te gaan, en wanneer het komt tot wapens: dit is wat we zullen gebruiken: Kennis, wijsheid, geduld en enthousiasme.

John Van Ast,
Mississauga, ON

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PERSOVERZICHT

• En zo werd het dan klokslag twaalf uur padoes een nieuw jaar. Er gebeurde verder niets dan dat een hele hoop mensen een hele hoop natte zoenen inkasseerden en een paar uur later met een kater van Jewelste rondliepen. Onze politieke leiders publiceerden politieke nieuwjaarsboodschappen en die zijn allemaal wel goed gemeend natuurlijk maar d'r zit toch altijd een bepaald luchtje aan.

• Die knappe meisjes die borreltjes rond brengen in de vliegtuigen van onze nationale luchtvaartmaatschappij besloten op het laatste nippertje om met Kerstmis niet in staking te gaan. Wat een snoezens he? Het feit dat ze zo ongeveer \$1000,- meer salaris per jaar gaan krijgen hielp natuurlijk ook wel.

• De ferme jongens en de stoere knapen van onze legermacht blijken niet zo „van-zessen-klaar-te-zijn” als hun voorkomen doet vermoeden. Een vertrouwelijk onderzoek wees uit dat in geval van eventuele handtastelijkheden tenminste een uit de vijf de voorkeur aan het hazenpad zou geven. Eerlijk gezegd dacht ik er ook zo over toen ik's konings wapenrok mocht dragen. Niemand heeft me er echter ooit naar gevraagd, en toen het zover was dacht ik er niet meer aan.

• Premier Allan Blakeney, overigens helemaal geen domme jongen, was ter gelegenheid van de jaarwisseling ook onder de profeten en maakte van de gelegenheid gebruik om te voorspellen dat het streven naar onafhankelijkheid in het Westen van ons land zou toenemen.

• In India heeft men, zoals u weet, een vrouw in het ambt: Indira Ghandi. Die dame is al meermalen op de roltrap van het politieke leven omhoog en omlaag geweest, maar ze weet nog steeds niet precies hoe een democratie in elkaar zit. Ze heeft een broertje-dood aan oppositie, en ze vond daar een probaat middel

tegen: ze stopte zo pakweg tienduizend van haar opposanten in de bak. Laten we maar blij zijn dat we in Canada wonen, zoiets zou Zijne Majesteit niet in z'n hoofd halen. Hetgeen me herinnert aan het feit dat ik met Kerstmis een boze brief kreeg van een echtpaar dat mijn betiteling van Trudeau als „Zijne Majesteit” wijdte aan mijn staat van vergevorderde senieliteit. 'k Zeg het maar even, dan weet de redakteur dat mijn stukjes toch gelezen worden al is het dan ook wel eens met minder vleeiende commentaren. Ik noem Trudeau „Zijne Majesteit” omdat ik vind dat die titel bij hem past. Net zoals ik mijn vrouw „schat” noem. Past haar precies.

• Met de beëdiging van Reagan voorhanden komen er allerlei uit het verleden bekende staatslieden weer uit hun meer of minder obscurante staat in het licht. Heer Kissinger is er een van, en hij doet net of hij nooit weggevoerd is. Hij vliegt alweer heen en weer tussen hoofdsteden in het nabije Oosten om water bij de soep te doen.

• In Venezuela wilden een paar gladde jongens ook wel eens een beetje centen aan Kerstmis maken en ze importeerden Canadese kerstbomen. Niemand echter trapt er in, en de gladde jongens bleven met de bomen zitten.

• En in de rubriek „te gek om los te lopen” krijgt van de week de douane op het vliegveld in Toronto bijzondere vermelding. Wat wil het geval? Een dame trouwt in Amerika waarheen ze eerstdaags gaat verhuizen. Omdat haar papieren nog niet in orde zijn keert ze voor een paar weken terug naar Toronto. Bij aankomst neemt de douane haar trouwring in beslag omdat ze die niet aangegeven had. Laat het een waarshuwing zijn voor al die mensen die op Schiphol zo vrijelijk de produkten van Lukas Bols inslaan.

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HAAGSMA: Mr. and Mrs. A.J. Haagsma wensen familie, vrienden en bekenden Gods zegen voor het komen de jaar.
R.R. #1, Salford, ON N0J 1W0.

KARSTEN: Wij wensen al onze familie, vrienden en kennissen een gelukkig Nieuwjaar 1981.
Mr. and Mrs. P. Karsten,
Box 94, Drayton, ON

VAN DYK: Mr. en Mrs. Cor van Dyk wensen familie, vrienden en bekenden een gelukkig Nieuwjaar.
Circle D Trailer Court, 2714, 10th Ave. N., Lot 41, Lake Worth, FL 33461.

THANKS

HEIDINGA: We wish to express our sincere thanks to our children, grandchildren, relatives and friends for making our 45th Wedding Anniversary such a happy occasion. Thank you for the gifts and cards. Above all we thank the Lord for all his blessings and care in all these years. Mr. and Mrs. Hedde Heidingsa.
Cornwall, ON

KOOGER: We wish to thank our family and friends for visits, cards and letters received in remembrance of our 55th Wedding Anniversary. We praise the Lord for his many blessings. To everyone we wish a blessed Christmas and New Year.
Mr. and Mrs. P. Kooger,
Box 152, Sunderland, ON

BIRTHS

BERGHOUT: Bernard and Anna (nee Spronk), thank and praise God, the giver of life, for the safe arrival of our daughter, JOANNE MARIE, born December 5, 1980, weighing 7 lbs. 11 oz. A welcome little sister for Michael.
Address: 38 Moorcroft Rd., Ottawa, ON K2G 0M7

GELEYNSE: Bart and Joyce (Los) praise the Lord for the safe arrival of another healthy son, JOEL CHRISTOPHER. He was born on Sunday, December 7, and is a little brother for Luke, Emily, Bart and Reuben. 7th grandchild for Rev. and Mrs. D. Los and for Rev. and Mrs. M. GeleyNSE.
R.R. #3, Winchester, ON

VANDER MEER: Mark 10:16: "Then he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on each of them and blessed them."
It is with great joy and deep gratitude to God, who has made everything well, that we, Siebe and Mary Vandermeer (nee Bos), announce the birth of our third child, ROSANNE MARIE, born on December 9, 1980. A little sister for Jay and Wesley. Another grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. Jack Vandermeer of Georgetown, ON and Mr. and Mrs. Casey Bos of Acton, ON.
General Delivery, Caledon, ON

BIRTHS

KUIPERIJ: Grateful to God for this new life, we welcome into our family, HEIDI MARIE, born Monday, December 15, weighing 8lbs. 3oz. Thankful parents are Dick and Marilyn (nee VandenBerg). A little sister for Jonathan. Proud grandparents are Bert and Marie VandenBerg, Oakwood, ON and Henry and Gerda Kuiperij, Acton, ON.
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VANDER MUNNIK: Herman and Mary thank the Lord for the safe arrival of a healthy girl, PAULINE JANTIENE, born December 30, 1980. Grandparents: Mr. and Mrs. H.T. Vander Munnik and Mr. and Mrs. J. deKok.
Home address: 11 Willow Ave., Cambridge, ON N1R 2Z2.

VAN ROOYEN: We, Alex and Anne thank God for the safe arrival of our son, ERIC WILLIAM, born December 11, 1980, 9 lbs. 10½ oz. A brother for Angela. Third grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. W. Van Rooyen, Charlottetown, PE. Tenth grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. G. Van Marum, Smithville, ON. Seventh great-grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. A. Van Rooyen, Thamesford, ON

MARRIAGES

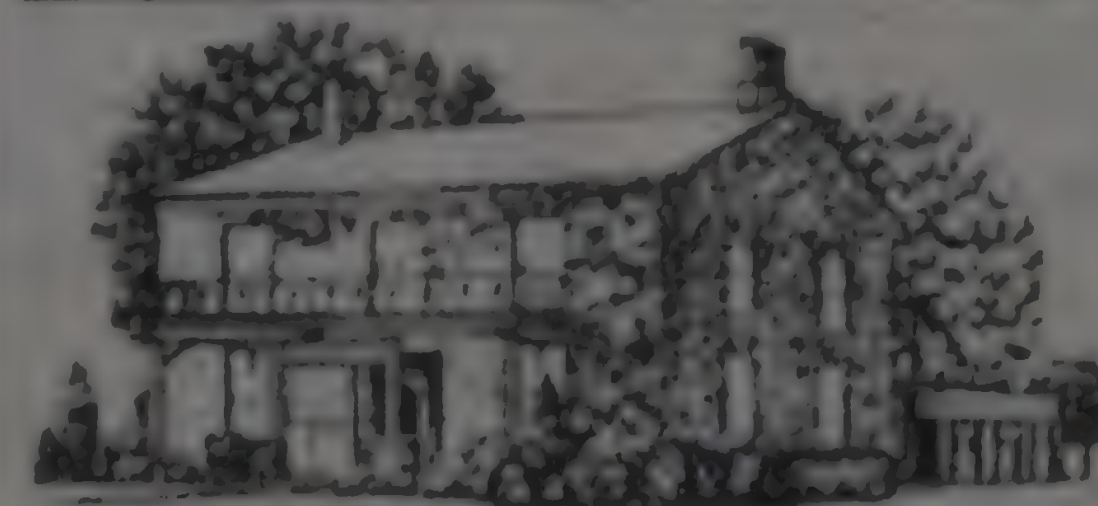
VEUGER-SPIELMAN: We like to share our happiness in the marriage of our daughter, JENNY to Constable MEL SPIELMAN, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. Spielman of Calgary, AB, as they begin their life together, with a love whose source is in the heart of God. The ceremony will take place, the Lord willing, on February 21, 1981 at 3:30 at Trinity Baptist Church, Kelowna, Rev. F. Heslinga of the Chr. Ref. Church officiating.
Future address: #301 — The Chateau, 331 Lake Ave., Kelowna, BC V1Y 5W8.

OBITUARIES

On Sunday, December 7, 1980 the Lord took to himself,

JOHN RUDOLPH EBBERS

of 202, Emmanuel Home, Edmonton, AB, in his 85th year. Mr. Ebbers is survived by his children,
George & Anne Visser — Edmonton, AB
Albert & Yni Ebbers — Edmonton, AB
Sidney & Lily Smit — Grand Rapids, MI
Rev. George & Julia Ebbers — San Jose, CA
Rev. John T. & Janet Ebbers — Orange City, IA
Joe & Jean Berger — Surrey, BC
Phillip & Kathleen Hesselink — Omaha, NE
25 grandchildren, 9 great-grandchildren;
one brother George — Grand Rapids, MI and one sister, Mrs. Dena Gort, Edmonton, AB
He was predeceased by his wife, Lily (Oldegbers) Ebbers, January 28, 1978 and one son, John Ralph in 1930.
Funeral services were held on December 10, in the First Chr. Ref. Church of Edmonton with Rev. H. Sampsonius conducting the service.
"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Psalm 91:1).



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Christian Funeral Director

OBITUARIES

We mourn in sympathy with Grietze Lubberts and her family for their grandfather and father,

ALBERT LUBBERS

who died on November 28, 1980, in The Netherlands at 85 years of age. May the God of grace give them his comfort.
John 14:2: "In my Father's house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you."
Congregation and Council
Waterloo Chr. Ref. Church

We mourn in sympathy with Hank and Margaret Ligterink and their children, Ann and Elaine, and the bereaved family, for their father and grandfather,

HANK LIGTERINK

who died on December 11, 1980, after a brief illness at the age of 79, in The Netherlands. May the God of grace give them his comfort.
Psalm 73:26: "My flesh and heart may fail but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever."
Congregation and Council,
Waterloo Chr. Ref. Church

On December 27, 1980, after a short illness, the Lord took unto himself his child our dearly beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother,

GEESJEALINA STRATING

at the age of 78.
dear wife of Jacob Leutscher

"The Lord is on my side to help me. I shall look with triumph on those who hate me" (Psalm 118:14).

F.A. DeKluis (nee Leutscher) & P. DeKluis — Krommenie, The Netherlands

M. Van Eyk (nee Leutscher) & G. Van Eyk — Brantford, ON

A. Sterkenburg (nee Leutscher) & A.C. Sterkenburg — De Meern, The Netherlands

C. 't Mannetje (nee Leutscher) & J. 't Mannetje — Ancaster, ON

B. Leutscher — Hamilton, ON

H. Van Wichen (nee Leutscher) & J. Van Wichen — Woerden, The Netherlands

G.A. Leutscher & R.E. Nimantsverdrit — Utrecht, The Netherlands

Funeral services were held on December 31, 1980.

Home address: Chopin Straat 45, Utrecht, The Netherlands.

"Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 7:24, 25; 8:1, 2).

On December 5, 1980, after a long illness, the Lord took home his child,

DIRK VAN RYK

at the age of 49. He patiently endured his suffering, always witnessing of God's grace in his life. Deeply loved husband of:

Laverne Van Ryk (nee Boulogne)

Dear father of:

Sid

Don

Marion & Julian Hudson — Escondido, CA

Angela & David Turner — 100 Mile House, BC

Conny

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Dear grandfather of baby Daniel Turner.

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Operation Friendship brought 74 refugees to Edmonton

by Tini Van Ameyde

"Viet-nam! Viet-nam!" The five young men, their dark eyes shining, were singing about their beautiful homeland... accompanied by our clapping hands. What a pity that we could not understand a word of it!

On that Friday evening, many members of Edmonton's Maranatha Christian Reformed Church gathered in the East Edmonton Christian School for a potluck supper with the Vietnamese they had sponsored over the last two years. The social, organized by our Refugee Committee, turned out to be a great success. What made it so was mainly, I think, the obvious enthusiasm of our Vietnamese guests. They turned up in such numbers — singles, young couples, families with grandparents and babies — that it was a little overwhelming. There were about 60... and, like most members, I never realized our congregation had managed to bring so many refugees to Alberta. Yes, it's amazing what Christians can do if they really try!

After Rev. Herman Praamsma had welcomed us all in English, Mrs. Siep Drexhage of the Refugee Committee welcomed our guests in Vietnamese. An act of bravery that, judging from their applause was truly appreciated. Church members of all ages took part in the program, together with the Vietnamese. Our Calvinettes did a nice job, singing and playing a game. Miss Heidi Kastelein acted as our pianist. "Take-a-Break," a group of senior members in North East Edmonton, presented a song and so — surprise — did our consistory. (No, the surprise was not that the brethren could sing, but that they could sing in such harmony!)

We also watched a movie about life in a refugee camp, shook hands left and right, and tried to make conversation with our guests. But the highlight of the evening, at least in the eyes of our children, was the Vietnamese magician. Neatly dressed up, complete with tophat and cane, he played all sorts of tricks on us.

What made the potluck supper special was, of course, the great variety of food: Canadian, Vietnamese, and Chin-

ese. Our guests had done their best to give us a taste of their favourite dishes. Some were absolutely delicious, like those stuffed triangles I selected on good advice. You can guess what happened: we almost ran out of food... Next time we should have a big pot of "erwtensoeep-met-worst" on the stove. It would not only feed a lot of hungry mouths, but also acquaint the Vietnamese with the yum-yum cooking of our Dutch grandmothers!

At the end of the evening, one of the Vietnamese men came forward to thank our congregation for its support and the Refugee Committee for everything it had done to assist them in their new country. Rev. Henry Jonker led us in a prayer of thanksgiving, and together we sang, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow!"

This first attempt to bring the members of our congregation in closer contact with the Vietnamese they sponsored was an enjoyable and rather interesting experience. It taught the Vietnamese that the people who invited them to Canada do not only sit in church on Sunday with solemn faces but — like they themselves — love to talk and make fun together. It taught them that the members of the Refugee Committee are not acting on their own, but that our congregation backs them up wholeheartedly.

And it taught us, for one thing, how privileged we are as citizens of a free and democratic country. Too often, we see only the shortcomings of our system. But in Canada a person can speak out publicly against injustice without fear of being exiled or thrown into prison... which is more than can be said of many other countries, including Vietnam.

One of the people sponsored by Maranatha — a grandfather who does not speak a word of English — spent two and a half years in prison for political reasons; six months of it chained to the floor. His health was ruined, to the point that he is now unable to work. Yes, a careful look at the refugees teaches Canadians one thing in a hurry: that their freedom and civil rights are more important to their well-being than all the luxuries money can buy!

Life in a refugee camp... dirty, depressing, degrading. While I watched that movie, I could not help wondering what our guests were thinking. Did it flood their hearts with bitter memories, or did it make them grateful because they had reached a place where they are free to make their own decisions for the future? Were they homesick for the war-ravaged country they left behind... or very glad that now, finally, they can raise their children in peace? What, exactly, did they think of Canada? I wish I knew

the answers.

But these are people with whom we are, at least for the present, unable to communicate in a heart-to-heart way. And not just because of cultural differences or the fact that most of them speak ten words of English, but because they have been kicked around for so long that they can't fully trust anybody anymore. (I'm afraid that to please us they are willing to call black white and say "yes" when they prefer "no"...) That's why the most precious thing we can give them is not our financial support, but a warm and personal interest: it will make them feel like human beings again.

Let me tell you a little more about two people in the group; one old, the other young. The grandfather I mentioned above may be unable to hold a job, but he is not content to sit at the window, watching his children go to work. To keep his hands busy, he makes beautiful

hammocks of nylon yarn! Can you picture yourself dozing peacefully between the green trees in your backyard? There are twelve hammocks ready for sale, at reasonable prices. So in case you are interested, please contact Mrs. Siep Drexhage, phone 474-7292. She will be delighted to take your order.

Xieu Quang, 20, is the man who saved our Refugee Committee from despair. Working with refugees takes a lot of time and patience, but what can make it downright frustrating is the language barrier. Imagine that you have to call in a translator every time you want to explain something... Fortunately, our committee found among the earlier arrivals a young man whose English was so good that he could give them a hand. Xieu acted cheerfully as their translator whenever they needed one. He also did a fine job

Continued on page 14



JAN ZWART 1877-1937

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Continued from page 13
helping singles from Vietnam
feel at home in our city. Our
best wishes go to Xieu Quang:

he sounds like the type, a boss
would love to have on his
payroll!
Operation Friendship, the

Lord willing, will be repeated in
1981. Of course, it would be
unrealistic to expect that all
these people will stay in our
area. They are not afraid of
hard work and seem deter-

mined to get ahead. Some
of the men I met have already
learned to speak English quite
well. They talked about even-
ing courses, going to trade
school, and even of starting a

small business in Edmonton.
Most Vietnamese have traders'
blood in their veins, you know.
Beautiful dreams... Where did
I hear all this before? Let's
hope for their sakes, that
Alberta's economy will not be
hit by more made-in-Ottawa
avalanches!

For the rest, I see no reason
to expect that the Boat People
as a group will find it much
harder to make a new start here
than "ordinary" immigrants.
Refugees from other coun-
tries have done it before them,
with less assistance than
they are getting. And as far
as their native culture is con-
cerned, they can rest assur-
ed: for preserving ethnic cul-
tures, there is no better place
than Alberta. (Sometimes I feel
that the only people who did not
take advantage of its climate are
the Dutch!) After a few years
they will discover that their gifts
and talents really helped to en-
rich life in our multi-cultural
society. On that day they will
know that Canada is their
homeland.

The last family sponsored by
Maranatha — a young couple
with a six-month-old baby —
arrived only a few weeks ago.
Which means that our Refugee
Committee will be very busy,
also in the coming year. A word
of appreciation for everything
the Committee has done in our
name so far is undoubtedly
well-deserved. In all, they
brought 74 refugees to Cana-
da! Our sincere thanks go to
Siep Drexhage, Abel
Buwalda, Miep Vriend, Mary
Greidanus, and all the other
members who served or are
still serving on Maranatha's
Refugee Committee. Don't
hesitate to ask for our financial
support, friends, any time you
need it... and may our
heavenly Father give you
wisdom you need for this
difficult work!

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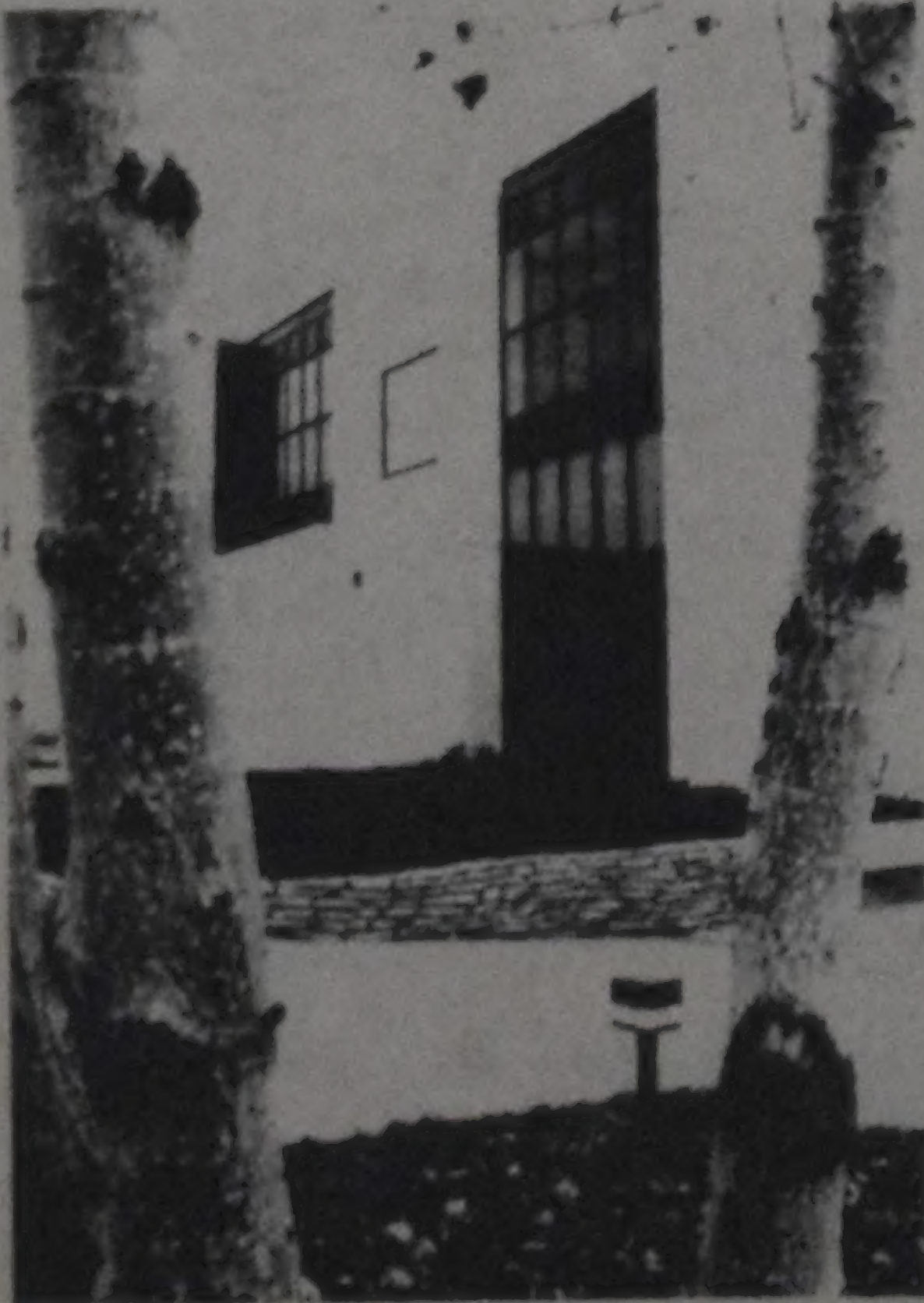
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Ah, child of mine, you're only five,
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That mom and dad are not
always
How Jesus teaches them to be.

Ah, child of mine, you're only
eight,
But yet so quick to hear
Those stinging words that
criticize,
Words that don't hold our
Saviour dear.

Ah, child of mine, you're only ten,
But yet so quick to feel
That mom and dad's emotions
oft
Give way to Satan's strong
appeal.

...
Child of mine, we're also
children,
Your Father is our Father too,
Remember, kids, that moms
and dads
Need God's forgiveness, just
like you.

Judy Lunshof,
Hamilton, ON

EVENTS

Niger churches launch evangelism/teaching outreach

MARADI, Niger Republic (EP) — Indigenous churches in this strongly Islamic nation have taken the initiative in launching a joint church-missionary project that has as its goal the planting of churches in 32 villages here on the edge of the Sahara Desert. "There are pockets of believers already existing in each village," explained veteran missionary John Ockers, of Sudan Interior Mission.

Three pastor-evangelists and one SIM missionary couple will work together in a carefully programmed five-year period of instruction, to strengthen these believers in the Christian faith, and help them form themselves into churches. The project was conceived by leaders of the Evangelical Church of Niger Republic, a 28-congregation church body.

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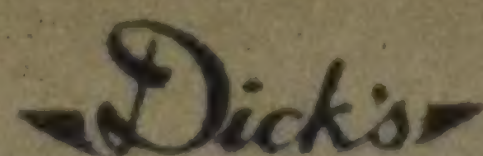
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CALENDAR of EVENTS

Ontario

Jan. 9- Feb. 20 "Focus on the Family" film series by Dr. James Dobson, Chatham District Christian Secondary School, 90 Park Ave. E., Chatham, on seven consecutive Friday nights at 8 p.m.

"Christianity and Capitalism" winter evening course in six sessions led by Dr. Bernard Zylstra at the Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto. Starts Jan. 29, Thursday evenings, till March 12. Call (416) 979-2331 for further information.

NEXT ISSUE

Dated	Mailed	Deadline for classified ads	Deadline for other advertising
Fri. Jan. 9 Fri. Jan. 16 Fri. Jan. 23	Wed. Jan. 7 Wed. Jan. 14 Wed. Jan. 21	Wed. Dec. 24-12noon Fri. Jan. 9-10a.m. Fri. Jan. 16-10a.m.	Wed. Dec. 24-12noon Thurs. Jan. 8-10a.m. Thurs. Jan. 15-10a.m.

LET'S PLAY CHESS

Editor: Pete Layer

FIRST SERIES OF PROBLEMS IN JANUARY

#856

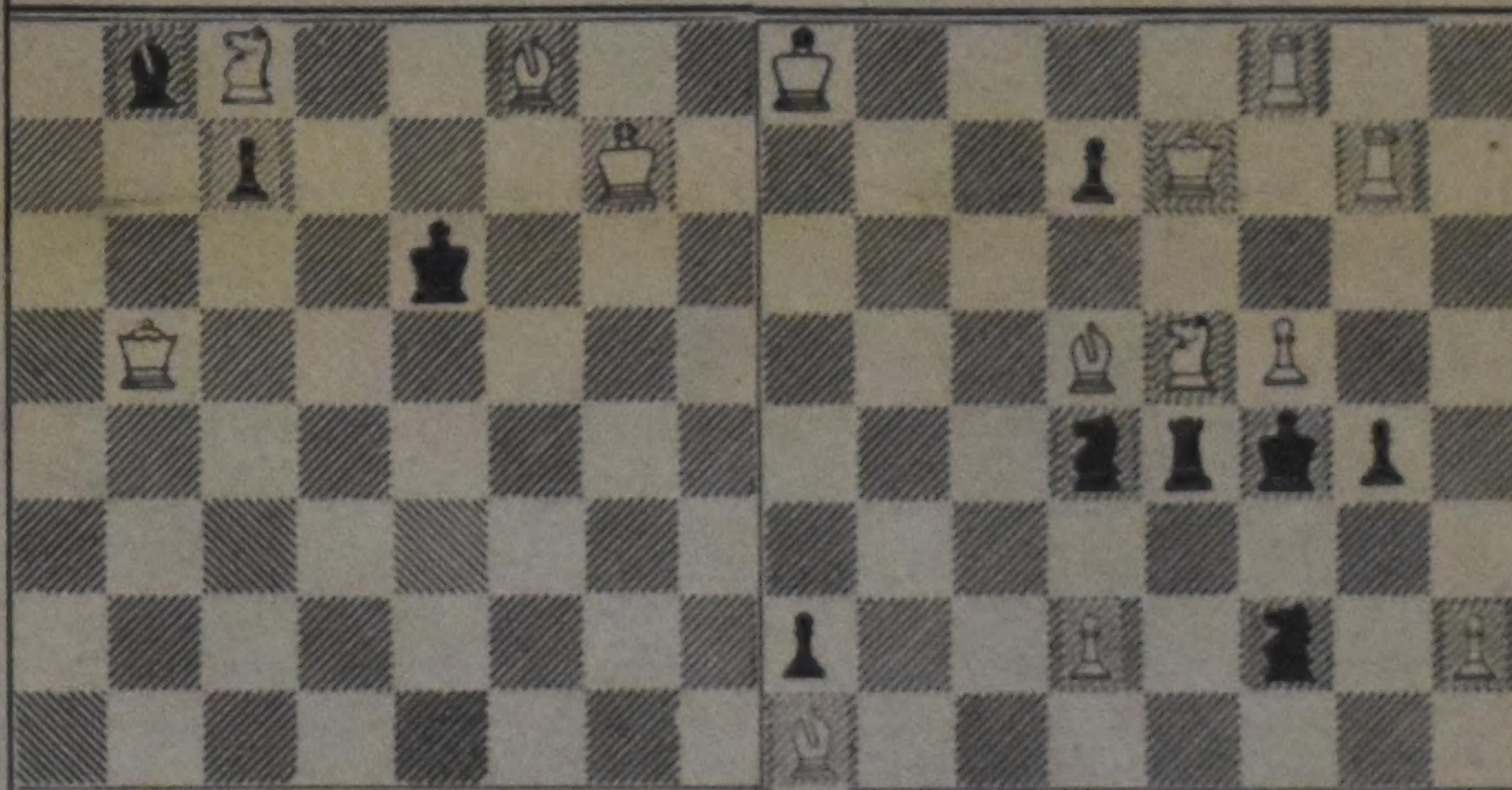
J. Breuer,
Germany, 1937

3

#857

V.F. Rudenko and
V.I. Chepeesni,
Russia, 1958

6



3-mover 3 pts.

2-mover 2 pts.

Notes:

1. A happy New Year to everyone. These first problems of the year will bring you some enjoyable moments, I hope.
2. The lonely pawn in the three-mover may give you some trouble. Please indicate the key, threat and all variations.
3. Remember the right way to move the pawns in #857. Give the key and threat, if any, to gain full points.
4. The deadline will be given with the second set of problems.

SECOND SERIES OF PROBLEMS IN JANUARY

#858

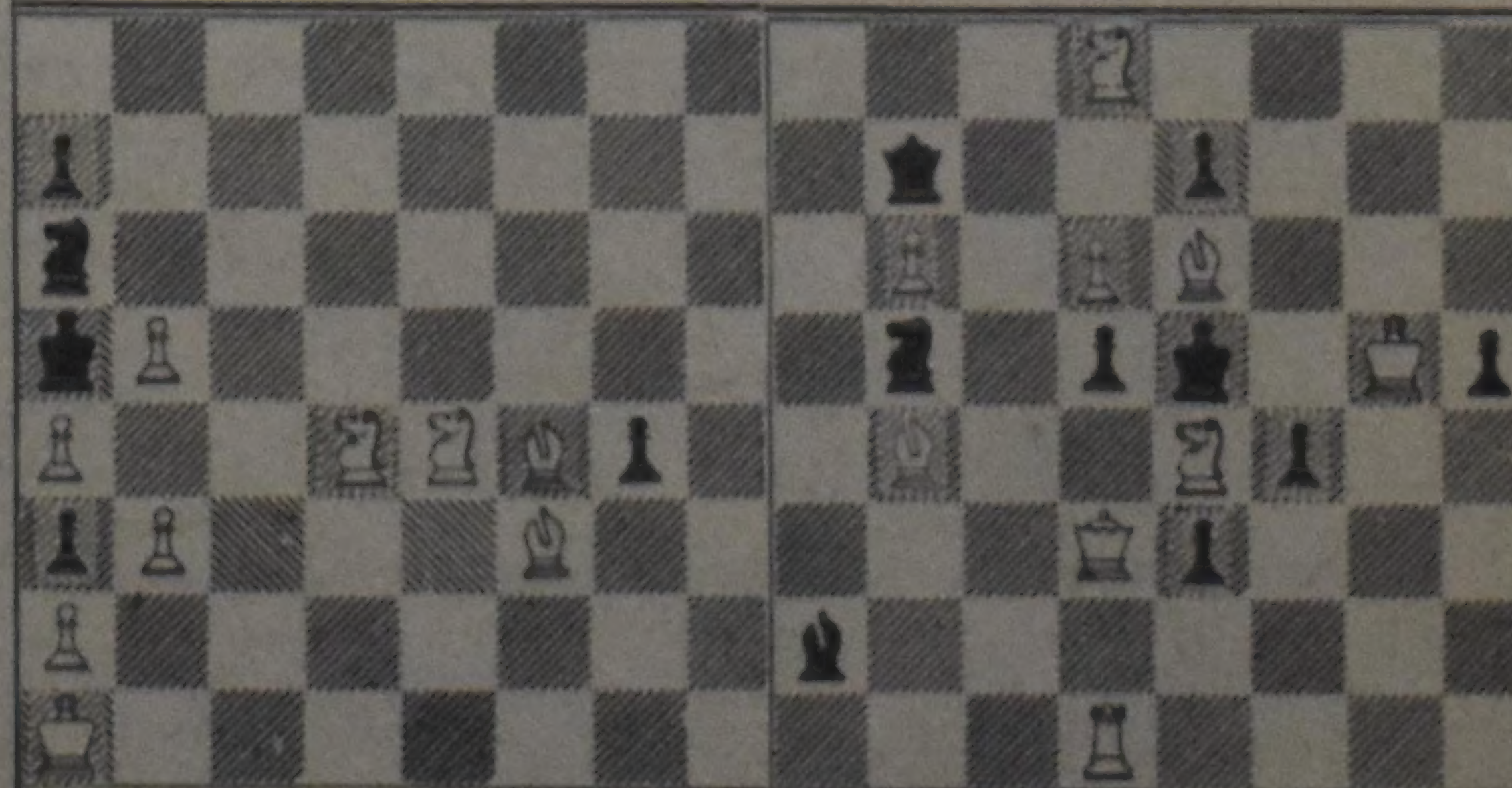
B.A. De Jong,
Holland, 1967

5

#859

J.A.W. Swane,
Holland, 1952

9



3-mover 3 pts.

2-mover 2 pts.

Notes:

1. The three-mover, #858, shows the Black King with 2 flight squares. It will be tricky to contain him. Please give the key, threat and all variations.
2. The older two-mover, #859, shows a King well-hemmed in. Please give the key and threat, if any.
3. The deadline for the January problems, #856-859 is February 20 for those in Ontario. Five days later for all others.

Books

Bible Study

Places in Bible history

Discovering the World of the Bible by C. Berrett Lamar; Thomas Nelson Publishers; Nashville, TN, 1980; Canada: Lawson & Falle, Cambridge, ON; 608 pp.; \$12.95. Reviewed by Peter Sluys, Salmon Arm, BC.

Thus far I have not seen as comprehensive a Bible Lands guide for such a low price and done so well. Most of us consider Israel the main and only Bible country. However, there are at present ten countries in which

many Bible events have taken place. This book describes with some detail, the important Bible sites and places in which scripture history occurred from Genesis to Revelation. Those countries are: Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey.

The places of the origin of the Christian faith and sacred places of both Jews and Moslems are embedded in a very rich history, which begs to be explored and knowledge about them provided here will assist in obtaining a

deeper understanding and love for the Scriptures.

The names of the biblical sites are explained in English, even alternate names are given and biblical references are added after each description.

Lamar obviously committed to a literal interpretation of the millennium which shows in his choice of Bible references. The structure of the book demonstrates a clear, logical order which makes it an interesting and helpful reference work.

The book is of particular value

for travellers to Bible countries. The place names do not follow an alphabetical order, but follows the geographical sequence for each particular country. Maps of important cities and sights such as the pyramids, Massada and, the Roman forum are many and detailed. The advantage of this volume is that a tourist only has to have one reference work handy for ten different countries.

There are only a few disadvantages, however. The stories of sites and cities are very concise, although very simply explained. It

is somewhat awkward that many coloured photographs (which are very beautiful) are not always sequentially placed. A photo of Petra in Jordan is found between pages describing Galilee.

I recommend this book for those who wish to use a handy, comprehensive travelguide, to those who do much Bible study, preaching, or Sunday school teaching; and to those who wish to obtain a clearer understanding of scripture and a greater enrichment through its geography and history.

Sociology

The church's witness in times of need

Disaster Response A Handbook for Church Action by John C. Bush; Herald Press, Kitchener, ON, 1979; pb., 171 pp.; Harry Veldstra, Burlington, ON.

This book is very clearly a handbook and should be used as such. The last half of the book is simply a directory of services available to disaster victims. The first half of the book is a model of a co-operative inter-church response to a natural disaster situation. The author is emphatic about this point but also suggests that this model may be useful in developing a single denominational response to disasters of other kinds as well as natural.

Bush gives a brief introduction

to steps a group may take in preparing for disaster and he presents a number of good pointers on how a church, by doing a bit of forward planning, can really become a haven in a storm.

In another chapter he relates the varied reactions of people in disaster. The chapter is useful either to those who are in disaster prone areas or who are considering working as volunteers in disaster areas. By knowing what varieties of reaction that can be evidenced in people who have suffered through a disaster, a person can prepare to respond more effectively.

Bush then follows with a description of the inter-church group he was involved with in the Kentucky area. You must bear in mind that

this model is from that series of disasters that hit the state of Kentucky in the years 1974, 1975, and 1977. The model developed in Kentucky, however, is a very workable one and is the one that Chr. Ref. World Relief Committee (CRWRC) and Church World Service work within natural disasters in the U.S.A.

The author postscripts the how-to section with a short theological treatise on why we as Christian churches should be involved in disaster relief. He explains that the church is working in the New Testament image of the faithful servant which while serving is also a redemptive community within the overall community. As a prophetic community the church must be prepared and also prepare

our neighbours by sharing its witness for Christ.

The fact that Bush leans so heavily on his experience in Kentucky is indicative of the relative newness of the interchurch or interfaith response to disaster recovery work. Through experience in CRWRC we realize, too, that the establishment of an interfaith response to disaster is a powerful tool that we as servants of God can use in reaching out into a community torn apart by a natural disaster. In work, long after the disaster is no longer in the headlines of the media and when the initial shock of disaster has worn away and reality in all its harshness settles in, is the time when an organized hand of the Lord can reach out and show

compassion that only the Christian by the grace of God can do.

The one drawback to the book is that the model described and the list of services available is totally American with the exception of one page in the services available section that lists the five church agencies in Canada that do respond to disaster.

This book will be useful for churches to read, especially in the area of preparing for disaster. To people contemplating going to work as volunteer workers in a disaster area it would be a good preliminary introduction to the vast experience one would gain on site.

Doctrine

Yesterday's Questions

A Short History of the Early Church by Harry R. Boer. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI, 1976; Canada: Oxford Univ. Press, Don Mills, ON; pb, 184 pp. Reviewed by Theodore Plantinga, Dept. of Philosophy, Calvin College.

It is sometimes said that theologians answer questions that no one is asking. I hope this is not true of all the theologians of our time, but it is certainly true of many of the theologians of the past — at least in the sense that certain questions they raised are no longer being asked. Why not?

In Harry Boer's survey of the history of the early church, we are introduced to some strange-sounding questions — the Christological controversies that dominated the church and theological discussion for many centuries. The book carries us through the resolution of those controversies. (It also deals with developments in the area of ecclesiastical organization.)

I believe we can learn something about how God guides and watches over his church as we trace the history dealt with by Dr. Boer in this volume. It is significant that certain questions of great import took a long time to settle,

and that major figures in the history of the church can be found defending doctrines that were completely abandoned by later generations of believers. Apparently God entrusts his teaching to the church as a body — and not to the leading thinkers as individuals.

Dr. Boer's book is simply written and could well be used in a high school setting, where church history is too much neglected. Christian schools might not care to devote a great deal of attention to the history of this or that denomination over the past hundred years or so, but they certainly should pay attention to the development of our central doctrines.

Are the Christological questions of the early church no longer being asked? Clearly the questions have changed in form over the past 1500 years, but people are still asking: Who is the Christ? The church made its affirmation centuries ago, but there are still plenty of people who balk at regarding Jesus

of Nazareth as the Son of God in the full sense. Therefore, we would do well to find out why the early church reached certain conclusions concerning the Christ — and we should also know what doctrines it rejected. Dr. Boer's book can help us here.

Biography

Retracing the life of John Calvin

God's Man by Duncan Norton-Taylor; Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1979; G.R. Welch Co., Burlington, ON; cloth, 298 pp.; \$10.75. Rev. A.A. Van Geest, Trenton, ON.

This book is a novel on the life of John Calvin, written by a man who is a journalist and editor by profession. Duncan Norton-Taylor has made an admirable effort to present John Calvin in the context of his own times. Though this book is a novel, it is a careful effort to re-create the historical person. The author has not deviated significantly from history.

Calvin is presented from his early life in his home town to his death in Geneva. We see the development of his theological thinking in which his teaching on divine election and God's fore-ordination receives most

emphasis. The writing of his *Institutes* is presented as a primary concern of John Calvin that occupied him to the last years of his life. His inner struggles as well as his conflicts with other reformers, with civic leaders in Geneva, and with other historical figures such as Servetus, receive thorough treatment.

His struggles and accomplishments in Geneva receive a careful and balanced attention, stripping all idealization away from the person of John Calvin. The reader is greatly helped in understanding the conditions under which Calvin ministered and which affected his actions. And although struggles never leave Calvin, in the end he is presented as a victor who finally received from Geneva the full recognition that he deserved.

The story is presented alternately from the point of view of several characters, including Calvin himself. It adds to the interest and balanced presentation of the person of John Calvin. The book aims at an adult readership. It will be enjoyable reading for anyone with an interest in the person of John Calvin. The book is a biographical novel, nevertheless, it gives us an objective treatment that will be helpful to our understanding of this great reformer.

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